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A typical Central American country scene.

Interamerican Geographical Readers

A Central American Journey

By Roger W. Babson

Member of United States Commission to Central America in 1916; President of the Babson Statistical Organization; Author of "Business Barometers," "The Future" Series, etc.

Illustrated with engravings maps and original drawings

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THE HOUSE OF APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

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In the tremendous undertakings of the men whose work it is to establish and maintain our trade intercourse with other countries, South and Central America are assuming a greater significance than ever before. They are our neighbors, our natural customers, offering innumerable half-developed opportunities for the exchange of commercial benefits. The Interamerican Geographical Readers, a series of which *A Central American Journey* is the first volume to be published, is intended to give to young people a groundwork of general information about our neighbors of the two Americas and a friendly interest in them. In the form of a story, this book brings out the difficulties, the rewards, the unique conditions, and the picturesque features of our trade with Central America. The boy who reads this book will be able to see Central America as a young engineer, or capitalist, or representative of a business house sees it—as a land of opportunity and adventure

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PREFACE

The attempt to combine in the form of a story for children an account of travel in the various countries of Central America and certain information on our commercial relations with these countries needs a word of explanation. The second of the two elements may seem, at first sight, to have no place in a book for young readers; for the commerce of today is so many-sided and complex in its operations, it depends for its success on so many elements in agricultural, political, and financial conditions, that the subject might well seem too involved for the understanding even of Macaulay's often quoted schoolboy.

It must be remembered, however, that salesmanship is the romance of today, and the linking of nation with nation, the world over, by friendly trade relations is the romance of the immediate future. Children hear their parents, older brothers, and uncles talk of some successful adventure in salesmanship as the youngsters of a past generation heard of the settlement of the Great West and the voyages of daring Yankee merchantmen to the Orient. It will be found that the subject of commerce has in itself great possibilities of interest for boys and girls.

Successful commerce, as our exporters have found out, must take into account an element which is not down in tables of statistics, which has never been reduced to a formula — and that is human nature. Every business transaction is a human relation. Every time an exporter receives an order from a ranchero in Guatemala or a dealer in a coast city of San Salvador, every time he sends out a consignment of shoes, or barbed wire, or

striped drilling, or oil stoves, to some remote mountain locality of a little-known country, his success in the transaction depends a great deal upon what he knows of the people to be supplied and of their ways and wishes.

The foregoing facts were most forcibly brought home to the author in the course of a journey made in the spring of 1916 as a member of the Central American Commission appointed by W. G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, under the direction of the President. It was on this journey that the idea occurred to him of writing a story to set forth the unique conditions and picturesque features of our trade with Central America. Considering that the commerce of the next fifty years will be in the hands of the boys and girls of today, it seemed well worth while to attempt a book that might help to give our young people a more sympathetic knowledge of one of the most important fields of our commercial relations.

It is the belief of the author that no successful trade relations can be established with any country on merely selfish principles. Action and reaction take place whenever one man has anything to do with another, whether they meet on a street corner or cable half around the globe. Unfairness begets unfairness, and fair dealing sooner or later insures fair dealing. The old saying that he who would have friends must show himself friendly is quite as true in the export business as it is in any other form of human association.

It is not the purpose of this little book to preach any particular business creed or establish any special theory in commercial dealing. Nevertheless, truth is truth, and no book not based on the truth is of much value in either prose or poetry, history or fiction. Every

American must desire that the American standard of business dealing, the American sense of honor, should be such as every American will be proud of. It rests with the boys now growing up to maintain what is fine and high and to root out, as far as they can, what is unwise and selfish in our business world.

In this story, the Carroll family, in their travels through Central America, see not only the beauty of mountain and valley, the quaint costumes of señorita, caballero or peón, but also the forces that help to make civilization. In the cities and towns of Central America they find people as interesting as any of their friends at home. They learn, as only the traveler can learn, the infinite variety and complexity of human life and the peculiar pleasure of adapting oneself to new conditions and making new friends where no friends were.

Grateful acknowledgment is made of the author's indebtedness to the President of Guatemala and to various other persons in official position in Central America who put at his disposal every opportunity for observation and for the gathering of information; also to Mr. John Barrett, Director-General of the Pan American Union, for valuable suggestions given. For assistance in adapting the material to the interests and the comprehension of boys and girls, thanks are due to Miss Louise Lamprey. The photographs which are used to illustrate the book have been gathered from many sources; the author wishes to acknowledge especially the kindness of the Pan American Union and the Washington Office of the Panama Canal in permitting the use of prints from their collection.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
1.	A Southward Flight	1
2.	Castles in New Spain	10
3.	Adventures of Today	20
4.	The Gateway of the World	31
5.	The Great Waterway	43
6.	On the Trail of Columbus	57
7.	A Plantation in Costa Rica	68
8.	Ups and Downs in Central America	84
9.	Mules and Mountain Trails	97
10.	Along the Tropical Coast	110
11.	The Ancient Land of Nicaragua	121
12.	Four Hundred Years of Progress	132
13.	The Wonders of a Wilderness	143
14.	The Treasure of San Juancito	155
15.	The Small Republic of Salvador	168
16.	Keeping Shop in Salvador	181
17.	From Coast to Capital in Guatemala	191
18.	Last Days in Guatemala	203
	Index	217

"The children came pelting in from school."

CHAPTER ONE

A Southward Flight

"What should you say, Isabel," asked Mr. Carroll from the doorway of the living-room, "to our going to Guatemala to live?"

He had not yet taken off his overcoat, and his wife had been on the point of asking him why he had come home so early. At his amazing question she gave a start that sent spools rolling over the table. "Why, Robert," she said breathlessly, "what do you mean? How could we leave the children?"

"That's it," he said slowly, watching her face, "do you think it would be wise to take the children there? You know something of it yourself from the month we spent there five years ago, and what I've told you. But should you like living there? The Company plans to open a Central American office, and has offered me the position of manager. The chief was frank about it. He said that they didn't want to call in a man from outside, and that having been there several times I knew

more of the region than any one else in the office. But he said that if I went, I should have to stay for some years. I told him I'd talk with you and give him an answer as soon as possible."

Mrs. Carroll was thinking fast. She looked about the pleasant room, so quiet and homelike in the early winter twilight, and felt rather as a plant might if it knew that it was going to be pulled up by the roots. Still, she was gardener enough to remember that transplanting is often good for plants — and sometimes for people.

"Robert," she said as Mr. Carroll came back and sat down in the big leather chair opposite her own, "I should say you ought to take the offer at once if it were not for Betty and Billy. I can see how much it would mean in every way. You have always said that the one big chance for American business just now is in these Central American republics. But if we have to go there now, the children may grow up in another country. They won't have the training and the association that their friends will have, when they come back here. It's a big question."

Mr. Carroll said nothing. He knew that it was a big question, and he did not want to settle it hastily. He was used to his wife's habit of bringing up every objection to a plan before deciding, and he expected her to do it now.

"If they were older," Mrs. Carroll went on, thoughtfully, "it wouldn't matter so much, because they would be away at school for most of the year, and if they were little things we should only have to consider their health. I suppose there are schools in Guatemala?"

"Oh, yes, — and governesses, and tutors. And if Billy decides to be an engineer, he will have the chance

to see American engineers working on some of the most interesting problems in the world."

"Lucía has had in many ways as good an education as they have," added his wife. "And she knows two languages."

Lucía Bastido was a little Central American, daughter of a professor in the University of Guatemala, whose mother had been a schoolmate of Mrs. Carroll's. After her mother's death she had been sent to the United States for three years' schooling, and had become almost an adopted daughter in the Carroll family. "The children would learn Spanish in Guatemala," said Mrs. Carroll, as the front door closed with a bang, "anyway."

"What do you mean, mother? What are you home so early for, Dad? What's it all about?" The children, rosy from the sharp November wind, came pelting in from school. Lucía, following more quietly, did not join in the clamor, but her big dark eyes were full of eager questioning.

"Too long a story to tell before dinner, children," their father answered, smiling. "You've only a few minutes to spare," he added, looking at his watch and then at Billy's grimy fingers and Elizabeth's bright, ruffled hair. Still wondering, the children took the hint, but their voices could be heard in lively discussion, for they felt that some great plan was in the air.

"They'll be wild to go," said Mrs. Carroll. "They are always begging me to get out my Indian embroideries and show people those photographs we took. After all, I taught twenty-five or thirty children in a class before we were married, and I suppose I could teach them now."

"And when they're twenty and twenty-two instead of twelve and fourteen," her husband observed, "who's

going to know the difference? I studied my Latin and geometry in the sugar house, watching the sap boiling in maple-sugar time, and the other fellows in my class got theirs, some of them in a preparatory school and some in other ways, but it was the same Latin and geometry after all. Betty will learn to play the piano and guitar, and ride well, and dance, in Guatemala just as she might at home. This country's too big to demand that all its children shall be run through one mold."

The children came in, very much on their good behavior, and Guatemala was not mentioned until the soup had been served. Then their father took pity on them and explained.

"This suspense is heart-breaking, isn't it? I'll tell you now that we may possibly go to Guatemala to live. You mustn't say a word about it till it's decided, though. Think how you'd feel if the news got all over town and then we didn't go!"

The children looked rather solemn. Billy's eyes were big and dark with excitement. Elizabeth squeezed Lucía's hand under the table. At last Billy inquired:

"Where should we live, father? On a ranch?"

"No; at least not for a year or two. We may have a ranch some day, but my office would be in Guatemala City, probably. There are many families who are English or American or who speak English. But if we go there we must try to know Guatemala and its people just as we expect any one who comes from another country to live here, to know and understand our people. We must make it our home."

This was a new idea to the Carroll children. While they were thinking it over, their father turned to Lucía.

"Your father plans to come North for you in December, Lucía. Perhaps we may all go together. We should

have to leave during the Christmas holidays to reach Central America in the dry season. I haven't had a vacation in two years, and I should have to travel through the Central American countries and look over the field before settling down. My idea would be to take you all with me, so that you could see something of the country at the beginning. We should land at Colon —"

"And see the Panama Canal!" exclaimed Billy. For the last two years he had studied every account and map and picture of the big canal that he could find in magazines, books, and newspaper supplements. When he was only a little fellow he had made mud dams in the brook on his grandfather's farm, and played with water wheels and dug new channels for the stream. Billy intended some day to be a civil engineer.

"They have parrots," said Elizabeth, "and bananas and oranges."

"Orchids," said Mrs. Carroll.

"And snakes," said Billy.

"Snakes don't live in cities," said Elizabeth, "do they, father?"

"It will be hot there," said their mother, warningly.

"It isn't hot in Queza tenango," Lucía remarked in her soft little voice. "It's the coast cities that are so very hot."

"What made them build their cities in disagreeable places?" asked Elizabeth.

"That's about as intelligent a question as people usually ask about a foreign country," her father answered. "Not all the cities are hot and uncomfortable. Three fourths of Central America is cool and pleasant. The lowland country along the coast is hot and unhealthy, but inland it is mountainous country with a temperate climate."

MAP OF
CENTRAL AMERICA
MILES
KILOMETERS
CARIBBEAN SEA
PACIFIC OCEAN
GULF OF HONDURAS
GULF OF DARIEN
GULF OF PANAMA
MOSQUITO GULF
JAMAICA
HAITI
COLOMBIA
GUATEMALA
HONDURAS
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
Kingston
Albarro Bk.
Morant Cays
Pedro Bank
Rosalind Bank
Swan Is.
Serranilla Bk.
Serrana Bk.
Quita Sueño Bank
Roncador Bk.
Old Providence I.
St. Andrews I.
Misteriosa Bank
Chinchorro Bank
Ambergris Cay
Belize
Lighthouse Reef
Turneffe
Barranca Bank
Santa Marta
Cartagena
Barranquilla
Medellin
Lorica
Turbo
Caucasia
Sabana
Capurgana
Capitan Bay
Panama
Colon
Balboa
Pacific Entrance
Atlantic Entrance
Gatun Lake
Gatun Locks
Pedro Miguel Locks
Miraflores Locks
Pearl Is.
Taboga I.
Taboguilla I.
Naos I.
Perico I.
Flamenco I.
Culebra
Panama Canal
Chagres River
Gamboa
Bohio
Obispo
Puerto Limon
Limon
Port Limon
Limon Bay
Cahuita
Cahuita Point
Puerto Viejo
Cocles
Cahuita Bay
Almirante
Almirante Bay
Bocas del Toro
Isla Colon
Isla Bastimentos
Isla Solarte
Isla Carenero
Isla Popa
Isla Cristobal
Isla Escudo de Veraguas
Isla Pastores

"Then why don't they live there?" persisted Elizabeth.

"I need an atlas to explain that," said her father, "unless you have a map in your head, which is the great reason for knowing geography, Betts, my dear. Get that map of Central America that has the heights of the mountains marked, and we'll have a lesson here and now."

Mr. Carroll swept most of the dishes still remaining on the table to one side, to make room for the great map. Four heads bent above it as his long pencil pointed out one place after another.

"Before the canal was built, all the ships had to go around the Horn, but here and there, along the coast, they would stop for water and supplies. In the old days of sailing ships most of the Central American fruits could never have been taken to our markets, because they would have spoiled. It is always summer in those tropical waters, remember. Ships in the business of trading between New York and San Francisco came near Central America all along the west coast, and in that way the west coast came to be settled first.

"Cities aren't built where they are because people found a place that was pleasant to live and said, 'Let's have a city.' They grow up in places where people have to live on account of business. The ships must have a good harbor, and people who come to the coast with things to sell to the sea captains must have storehouses to put them in, and there must be boarding houses or hotels for the sailors and merchants and travelers who come into the town. If there is a rich country inland where a great many things are produced, and many roads come from it to the seaport, and the harbor is so large that many ships can anchor there, the port

may come to be a big city like London, Hamburg, Marseilles, New Orleans, or New York.

"But this wasn't the case in Central America. You see this long range of mountains all down the middle of it like a backbone. Look at the heights of those mountains marked on the map. No matter what grew there — coffee, or mahogany, or grass for cattle — whatever came down to the coast had to come over mountain trails on the backs of men or mules. That's an expensive way of carrying freight, you see. Bananas, one of the chief crops of Central America, need low, hot, moist land like this near the coast. But until very lately it cost so much to get goods to market from the inland country that traders let Central America alone and gave their attention to countries where the profits were bigger. In New Orleans, for instance, you find a city to which all the produce of the Mississippi Valley could come by boat, and did, for half a century."

"Well, how is it any better in Central America now than it ever was?" asked Billy. "Did the Panama Canal make a difference?"

"Yes; and there are other things that have changed," answered his father. "That's where electricity and engineering come in. There is water power which can be made to run factories, either directly or by using it for electrical plants. Engineers can bridge cañons and build new roads and invent ways to make mining profitable. Sanitary engineers know how to make life safe in an unhealthy place. There's an immense amount of wealth in Central America; all we have to do is to figure out a way to get it to the markets. The people of these republics know it, perhaps even better than we do. They need us and we need them."

"What steamers go there, Dad?" asked Billy, who still remembered his visit to the wharves where ocean liners lay awaiting their passengers.

"The fruit companies have their own steamers, and we'll probably take one of those if we go," his father replied. "This is the route," he added, tracing it with his pencil.

"If we go!" repeated Elizabeth. "Seems to me we are going. Aren't we, mother?"

"I think we are," laughed Mrs. Carroll.

"New York harbor was growing small in the distance."

CHAPTER TWO

Castles in New Spain

When a robin hatched in spring finds all his family ready to go South for the winter, he must be surprised to see how easily they leave their pleasant summer home. As the Carroll children saw their home packed away in boxes and their mother busy with lists of things to be bought and done, they felt rather like young birds getting out of the nest for the first time. They had to answer all sorts of questions from their friends at school, and almost every day some plan for the coming winter had to be met with the reminder:

"But we aren't going to be here then, you know."

Then one evening their father came home with the steamer tickets, and they began to feel that they were really going.

"Our rooms are the best in the boat," said Mr. Carroll with satisfaction. "They're on the windward side — the ocean side."

"What difference does that make?" asked Billy, the practical.

"The trade winds blow from the ocean and make that side of the boat cooler," explained his father.

"B-r-r! Cool, in this weather!" shivered Elizabeth.

"Three days after we leave port," remarked her mother, tucking the fifth white dress into Elizabeth's little new steamer trunk, "you'll be glad of these white linen suits even if it is December."

The furniture and whatever else was not needed for traveling would go straight to Guatemala City. The Carrolls took with them only steamer trunks and hand bags, and a hold-all containing rugs. Not only the trunks but most of the clothes that went into them were new, and Elizabeth said that they had "skipped a winter and got their clothes ready for next summer." White linen suits, soft broad-brimmed hats, light waterproof coats, light underwear, and a few light woolen garments had to be provided, and Mr. Carroll warned his wife that laundry work was often unsatisfactory and that he was going to lay in a supply of soft collars and negligé shirts. Into his trunk went his well-worn riding-suit and leather leggings; and mosquito nets, ready made for hanging over beds, were among the curious things provided for emergencies. The two cameras were provided with films carefully packed for the tropics.

In the midst of their preparations came Christmas, and all the presents that they gave each other as well as most of those from relatives and friends were chosen for use on the journey. Mrs. Carroll made out a list of things which would be useful, and it was passed around among the uncles, aunts, and cousins, who were very indefinite in their ideas of tropical life and only too glad

of further information. Thus the Christmas gifts received that year included traveling bags, toilet sets, and suitcases, all as light in weight as possible, silk sweaters, maps, books on Central America, rugs, umbrellas, and a fine camera for each of the three children.

"At this rate," chuckled Mr. Carroll as he tucked some new ties into his scientifically packed steamer trunk, "we shall not find ourselves in the position of the man who went to sell snow plows in Brazil."

Elizabeth's eyes grew round with astonishment. "Father! Nobody ever did?"

"I have heard so, my dear. He probably didn't come out as well as Lord Timothy Dexter. He was a queer old fellow who lived in Newburyport in the great days of sailing ships, more than a hundred years ago, and he sent a cargo of warming-pans to the West Indies. The sugar planters took off the lids and used the long-handled pans to ladle out their sirup."

"I can tell you truthfully," said Señor Bastido, who had come to spend Christmas with his little daughter and her friends, "that a large consignment of fur-lined coats was once shipped to Honduras. Honduras is only fourteen degrees from the equator."

"I know of a house in New York," added Mr. Carroll, "whose export department not only sent handsome catalogs printed in English to correspondents who knew only Spanish, but inclosed perfectly good United States stamps for replies. A stamp, of course, is no good outside the country that issues it, except to carry a letter to some foreign country. You couldn't post a letter here with an English or French stamp on it, and have it reach its destination. It would be returned to you, possibly, or it might be treated like a letter with no stamp at all."

"Yes," said Señor Bastido, "when one builds a castle in Spain one should not be disappointed when it vanishes into the clouds. I am afraid many of the dreams of a great trade with Central and South America are nothing but castles in Spain with no foundation to carry them."

"Father," said Elizabeth, who was getting a little out of her depth in this conversation, "what do you mean by a castle in Spain?"

"Just what you heard just now — a dream that has no foundation. I have heard that the saying came from the fact that there are no castles in Spain, so that a man who bragged about his estates there was drawing on his imagination. But it is true that many of the companies which have been formed to trade with our southern neighbors are simply got up for the purpose of getting something for nothing by cheating some one else.

A cook in a Central American city returning from market.

"We shall go to Central America to give as well as to receive, I hope. If I didn't believe that I have something to give to Guatemala I should stay where I am. Every one has something to give to his neighbors. We shall adopt the ways of Central America when we find that

they are better than ours, considering the place and the climate, and they may like some of our ways better than they do their own. When a man starts out to get as much and give as little as he can, he is likely to lose what he has. Fate comes back at him just as a rubber ball flies back when you bounce it against the wall. Every action, good or bad, has its reaction. We want to be pioneers, ready to build on a good foundation."

The children rather liked to hear their father talk when he was thinking aloud. They did not always understand all he said, but they felt that he was speaking of big things, and wanted them to see how he regarded them.

When at last all the preparations had been made, and each of the children had been sure some treasured possession was left behind, and had found it safe after hasty search, the Carrolls found themselves on board the steamer. New York harbor with its towering down-town buildings was growing small in the distance. The blue water sparkled under a brilliant winter sun. The keen wind made them button up coats and sweaters.

Three days later all the steamer chairs were occupied by passengers in white linen, exchanging stories of the tropics.

There was a grim-looking old Scotch doctor on board, who turned out to be especially friendly to children. They never tired of hearing his quaint rhymes and stories of the Scottish mountains and lakes.

"I wish things like that happened in America," said Elizabeth, one day. "I know about Pizarro, of course, and the Incas, and Sir Francis Drake, but nothing very exciting seems to have happened since the explorers came."

"Ay, do ye say that?" asked the old doctor, with a

twinkle in his eye. "Weel now, let me tell ye there's a tale about this vera Isthmus of Panama — they called it 'Darien' two hundred years ago. It was a real Castle in New Spain. Did ye never hear of William Paterson and the Darien Company?"

Nobody had. Mr. Carroll sat down on the foot of his wife's chair close by and listened as eagerly as the children.

"Ye may have heard of the persecuting of the Covenanters," Dr. Macgregor began, "and the wars between England and Scotland for two-three hundred years? After all their experience o' that sort, the Scots were none too willing to be friendly; and when William and Mary strove to unite them under one flag with England, they held off. But there were those even in Scotland wha thought it a good thing and favored the Union.

"Now, William Paterson was frae Dumfries, where my ain family lived, and must ha' seen something o' the persecution o' the Covenanters. They say that when he was a lad of eighteen he was one of those who risked life and liberty to carry food to the refugee ministers hid in the glens. When the officers heard of it and came to arrest him, he fled and went to the West Indies. There were plenty of his own folk there — the Scotch are aye roving about the world — and he learned the ways o' the country and traded in one thing and another. Some say he lived awhile in New York. In time he became a rich merchant in London, and that was no so easy for a Scot in those days. He founded the Bank of England in 1692, and organized a company to give London a better water supply; and they say he surveyed the part that's now called Bloomsbury and planned it out for houses with gardens and open parks around them.

"He was just wonderful in his knowledge of accounts, William Paterson was. As the Bible says, 'Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings.' The King had a good head for business, and he listened to all William Paterson had to tell o' the wonderful new country in the tropics.

"It was William Paterson the Scot, I'd have ye mind, wha could see more than two hundred years ago the vision of yon Panama Canal. He said the Isthmus was 'the door of the seas and the gateway o' the world.' He made it plain to the King how goods might be carried over mountain trails from one ocean to the other where the neck of land was narrowest, and save the long voyage round the Horn. He told him furthermore that by the Providence of God this Isthmus was the last bit of land unclaimed in this part o' the world. He said that if a colony o' righteous, God-fearing traders were given

House building and plastering in Central America.

the right to found a settlement on that little strip o' land between the seas, there would be some day a second city of Tyre.

"So long as they thought it only talk, the English merchants didna trouble their heads. But at last the King granted the charter to the Scots, and the subscriptions for shares began to come in like snowflakes on the moor. The Darien Company took in a million pounds, — that's five million dollars, — almost before they knew it. The subscriptions came in from England and Holland and France as well as Scotland, and there seemed no end to them.

"Then the East India Company in London were in fear that the new Scotch company would be getting their trade away from them. They were like what ye call a trust nowadays. There was wealth enough in the New World for every one, but they couldna believe it, and they were in a state of great fear. And it's a coward, always, that is cruel.

"But while the Londoners were talking to the King and Parliament, the Darien Company was fitting out ships, five of them, and twelve hundred men ready to go. Not a man of them but was sure of coming back wi' shiploads of gold. Some grasping ones got control of the Company, and at last they let Paterson go just as a supercargo — a kind of clerk. They were mad for gold. He tried to advise them, but they paid no heed. He told them to take care they had stores for a nine weeks' voyage, but they never even did that. Then when they were out to sea they found there had been dishonesty there and they had food for only six weeks, some of it not fit to eat.

"For all o' that, Paterson's heart was in the venture,

and instead o' staying safe at home he went, and his wife with him. Sick and sorry they were of the sea before they reached land. Even then, when Paterson told them the huts ought to be built on high ground, the captain wouldna listen. He wanted to save carrying water, and so they started building in a marsh. Little huts they built, of precious wood that would ha' been a treasure to a cabinet maker, but it was only common timber there; and they thatched the roof with reeds. Of course they got fever in that swamp, and being taught, as Paterson said, by experience, the schoolmaster of fools, they took to the high ground after about two months. But there were many that died of the fever, and Mrs. Paterson was among the first.

"While all this went on, the jealous East India Company had got the ear of the Government, and an order was sent out to all the English colonies in America not to trade with the Darien colonists, nor to sell or give them provisions or help them in any way. Of course the Spaniards would not be friendly in any case, and the order was just a sentence of death if they stayed.

"When the Company was formed, it had been settled that there were to be no slaves. Other colonies had made slaves of the Indians, ye see. But here the Indians were friendly and gave a banquet to the white men. Yet there was no chance for them after the Government turned against them, and they didna even know of the order at first. At last, after eight months the remnant of them gave it up and sailed for home in the only ships they had left, the *Caledonia* and the *Unicorn*. William Paterson begged to be left there even if he had to stay alone, for he still believed that others would come; but they would not let him. He was so ill with fever he had

to be carried on board the ship. And if they'd stayed only two months longer a second colony would have found them there. As it was, the newcomers found the place deserted and gave it up, too. Only thirty, out of two thousand four hundred, ever came home again. Paterson was one of them, and in spite of the failure of the Company his own people at Dumfries sent him to the first Scottish Parliament. He was born two hundred years too soon, was Paterson.

"To this day that bay is called Port Escoces in memory of the Scots that tried to found a new city there. And that's how England, away back in 1698, lost her chance to own the Panama Canal."

CHAPTER THREE

Adventures of Today

"Salesmanship," said Mr. Carroll, "is a big adventure."

Dr. Macgregor nodded his shaggy old head.

"The Glasgow man that sells water pipes to the Argentine is no sae romantic as a knight in armor," he commented, "but I'm thinkin' he's mair useful in that climate."

The men on the shady side of the deck chuckled over the notion. The three others were young. Frost was an electrical engineer; O'Keefe was commercial attaché for the United States Government, and a young salesman named Follansbee was traveling for a hardware house.

"If some salesmen would get it through their heads that adventure does not mean going at it with a chip on the shoulder," said O'Keefe, "my job would be easier."

"Might not have any job in that case," Frost suggested lazily.

"Well," declared the salesman, "you have to sit up all night when you're dealing with some people unless you expect to get left. These are times when it takes some push to land the business."

Mr. Carroll smiled. "Have you been down here before?"

"No, but there's no use being too polite about it, people half the time don't know what they want. You have to tell 'em, and then you go on and make them buy it."

This time both Frost and O'Keefe smiled. The doctor got up and stalked away.

"There's a little verse of Kipling's I remember," remarked Frost, "something like this:

"And the end of it all was a tombstone tall, and the name of the late deceased,
With the epitaph drear, 'A fool lies here who tried to hustle the East!'

You see, in a fight between one man and a whole country — and its history behind it — the odds are more or less on the side of the country."

"Frost knows," observed O'Keefe. "He doesn't try to fight now. He simply goes and does things."

"That's what I mean," Follansbee insisted. "Just go ahead. As the old man says, we ought to be selling all this country now."

"You won't sell the country so soon as you think, maybe," said Frost, dryly. "But you'll have more chance of selling goods in the country, if that's what you want, when your home office is educated up to the situation. You'll be in luck if your goods are packed so that they aren't broken to bits, or shipped to the wrong port. You'll have to compete with Europeans and Japanese who know the ground as they know the fingers on both hands, and you'll begin to wonder, after a while, if your shipping clerks know the right hand from the left."

"It isn't so bad now as it used to be," put in Mr. Carroll. "Until a few years ago American business men didn't really care to secure Central American customers, but now some of them are going at the problem in the right way. I've asked a good many exporters about it, and some of them say that fifty per cent of our manufacturers are wasting their money, others say that only ten per cent really need educating; but they all agree that there is plenty of room for improvement. One man told me he had been in the export business

fifteen years and that if he spent his life at it he would still have much to learn. In each of the countries south of the Gulf of Mexico conditions differ, and they also change from time to time. I imagine that what Frost refers to is the blunders of clerks in a big office where a small mistake may make no end of trouble. When one of them writes pounds instead of kilos, and the shipment is going thousands of miles away, the cost of such a blunder is serious. The firm can discharge the clerk who made the mistake, but that doesn't help the salesman down here in the tropics."

Frost nodded. "That was the kind of thing that happened to me," he said. "It was my first job here, and it shows you what can happen when you're out at the latter end of nowhere selling something to a man who needs it badly. I'd been sent by the head of my concern to a coffee plantation on the side of a mountain to install an electrical contrivance for a planter who had traveled in our dear home country and ordered it at our factory. I landed at a little coast town and waited there some time in the company of the mosquitoes, and then I got uneasy. There was a time limit on the job. If we didn't finish the installation by a certain date, there would be a forfeit to pay. I telegraphed, and got word that the freight had been shipped to another port, which the head of the export department thought would be nearer. It was nearer, as the crow flies, but I wasn't a crow, and there was no railroad from there to the plantation. It would have to go two thirds of the way on mule-back in any case, though, and I joyously hastened to the port they mentioned and arranged for mule trains, drivers, and so on. The consignment hadn't come, but the steamer got in a day or two after I did.

"Upon my word, I don't know how they ever got that freight ashore. The important fact so far as this story is concerned is that parts of it weighed over two tons apiece. The planter had told them to have these cast in sections, as we always did cast them when they were going to such a place as this. When I beheld them, all four sections of each piece had been cast together in two-ton iron chunks. And it wasn't the kind of thing that you could chop in pieces.

"At first I had a mind to ship them straight back to the factory and write a letter that would make their hair stand up. Then it seemed to me that it would be better to get the thing into place first. The señor from his place in the mountains had been sending telegrams, and it didn't seem exactly fair to him to delay the matter indefinitely. I sent my head man out for all the mules he could find, and somehow or other he gathered a train that I believe they are talking about down there to this day. There was a mule famine in the neighborhood until we got back. While he was on his mule hunt I built a kind of rough truck that would hold the castings, tied them on it, and off we moved.

"You understand that this mule train of ours had to find its way over trails intended for one mule at a time. A mule can hold on to a mountain side as if he had claws on his feet, but the freight-truck hadn't any claws, and we had some narrow shaves. Then, one day, we came round the spur of a mountain and found a cliff rising straight up on the left, five hundred feet or more, and a sheer drop of at least a thousand feet on the right into a cañon. The track between them, twisting round the mountain, was maybe three feet wide.

"You will find, if you stay long in this country, that

"'If anything had slipped, the whole outfit would have gone to kingdom-come.'"

your firm expects you to follow instructions whether it can be done or not. Fortunately, the mules and muleteers are used to being told to do impossible things. I told my head man to go and get me some trees somewhere, and he got them — I don't know where. The gulf on our right was not very wide, and I was told that the country on the other side was not bad at all. We rigged a sort of bridge over that cañon, lashing the trunks of the trees together with ropes and rawhides, and started. Of course, if anything had slipped, the whole outfit would have gone to kingdom-come, but nothing did. When the machine was in its place I sat down and sent a letter to the office full of all the things I had been thinking up to tell them. No; they didn't do that again. The next time they did something different."

"Our firm doesn't deal in that kind of thing exactly," said Follansbee, in a rather more subdued tone. "We handle agricultural machinery, hardware, and so on. There ought to be a good market for that in any agricultural country."

"There's a certain difference between agriculture in Central America and farming in Illinois or Mississippi," said O'Keefe. "I was in Guatemala in the corn-planting season last year. The Indians fertilize the fields by letting the sheep run in them to feed on the roots of the corn stalks. They use a crooked stick for a plow, and plant with a large hoe called an *azadón*. Sometimes they burn the land over and don't plow it at all. One planter told me that the year before he used modern machinery on a sloping hillside, stirring up the soil thoroughly. His Indian tenants stuck to their old ways. The first big rain washed all his corn down the hill. The Indians planted their corn in holes made by hand, it stayed where

it was, and they made the usual crop. It might be possible to terrace this hilly country and use modern machinery in that way, but you see all that takes money, and the Indians have none."

"Even so," said Mr. Carroll, thoughtfully, "there is a chance that American factories could make the tools the people use better and cheaper than they can be made elsewhere. I know one firm which makes machetes, the cutlasses the people here use for all sorts of work where we might use axes or some other tool. Indian guides use big, heavy ones to cut a path in the jungle, just as they did in the days of Cortés. There are short ones not more than two feet long, and some are made ornamental, with carved ivory or inlaid handles. Native troops used the machete in the Cuban war. All these machetes practically had to come from Europe until this firm saw its chance and began to make them."

"Modern machinery could be used more than it is," added the engineer. "On the line between San Felipe and Quezaltenango they began a railroad all by hand, and there were some tremendous cuts and falls. Laborers used the *azadón* as pick or shovel by turns, and cut down trees and grubbed up roots with machetes. They lugged off rocks and dirt on hand barrows. The managers could get men at from eight to twelve cents a day, and didn't think it would pay to bring in labor-saving machinery. But if they had used machinery they could have done more work with the same men."

"Possibly five times as much," said Mr. Carroll. "As things are, a great deal of water power is wasted. Machinery could be used to improve the roads, and with better roads they could put in more machinery. A mule can carry three bags of cement, a man two bags, and a

Day laborers in Central America using the *azadôn* (hoe) and the *machete* (large cutlass).

boy one bag. If they used that human labor for operating machines, it would count for so much more that the machinery would pay for itself."

"But all these pretty possibilities," said Frost, lifting his long figure out of his steamer chair, "depend on getting your goods to the man who wants them; don't forget that. Tell your home office, if you have any influence with them, to follow the customer's instructions word for word. He knows what kind of road it is to his mine, or plantation, or whatever he owns in this country, he knows what kind of labor he has to depend on, and he knows what the customs regulations and freight rates are. He's had plenty of time to learn them. I knew a case where the order read that the goods should be packed in boxes that held not more than 75 kilos, because

that was all that could be easily handled in getting them over the roads. The manufacturer hadn't any cases of that size just then, and used cases holding 175 kilos instead. The customer lived up in the mountains somewhere, he had had the goods insured, and he found that if he was to get them at all they would have to be unpacked and repacked in cases of the proper size, and that would make his insurance absolutely no good. You see, he had insured them against theft and other accidents, and he meant them to come straight through in the original package. All this would mean a loss that would amount to more than he would make on the goods if he got them. You see, when a case of stuff may have to travel in all weathers, or lie on an open platform overnight, it's important to have it properly packed when it leaves the factory."

"I can tell you something to beat that," said O'Keefe, rising also. "I knew an American down here who ordered about a hundred packages of a particular kind of stationery. The home office packed it in a wooden box considerably too big; labor was costly just then, and to have a box made just to fit the order would have cost more than the profit on the order would be. The extra space — about three fourths of the box — was filled up with waste boards. In the country to which it was sent, the duty is figured by the weight of the consignment, and if it is mixed goods the rate for the whole parcel is that on the most expensive goods in it. Thus you see the American had to pay duty on his paper and the scrap lumber on the same basis. The duty amounted to more than the cost of the paper. Maybe he didn't have something to say in the next mail!"

"And supposing he lived in Chicago, maybe some

thoughtless person in Maine or Los Angeles would do the same thing the next week," said Frost, with a yawn. "Pity these indignant people with experience can't collect their experiences into a book. But then, perhaps the exporters who need it most wouldn't read it — they don't all read the consular reports. You can see from what we've said that if goods can be packed in light crates strongly made with waterproof covers, it's an advantage in a mule country."

"Another thing that you may have to explain to your home office," said Mr. Carroll, "is the absolute necessity of enough stamps on their letters. In most Central and South American countries the letter with insufficient postage is not delivered and the postage collected by the postman as it is in the United States; it is advertised. You may not happen to see the advertisement, and if you do, you may have to go in person to the post office for your letter. Even then there is often a good deal of red tape to delay matters."

"But don't get discouraged, Follansbee," O'Keefe added. "There's plenty of trade here, and you'll find that there is a reason even for some things that seem senseless. Very often it's climate, and the equator isn't ever going to move. Jove! Look at those clouds!"

The words were hardly spoken when a gust of chilly wind swept over the sea, the sun disappeared behind a black, steamy cloud, there was a roar and a flash and sheets of rain sent everybody scampering for shelter. Safe inside, the children looked out at what Billy said was "the grand-daddy of all the thunderstorms that ever were."

"I've seen the course of the Chagres River marked out in white mist clear as chalk, before a storm like this,"

said Frost, as he stood looking over their heads at the deluge. "The sun draws the water up into these great banks of cloud, and when the air has all it can hold the whole collection comes down at once. This is a little late in the winter for it, though. I don't believe you'll see another."

"My! I'm glad our decks are made so it will run off," said Elizabeth, sagely. "We'd sink in about a minute if it could come in here."

"I have seen water several inches deep on the earth in such a rain as this," said Mr. Carroll. "But it won't last long."

It did not. While they were at dinner the sun came out, and seemed brighter than ever. The young engineer told them they might be glad they were not on land near a swamp, or they would know just how it felt to be boiled.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Gateway of the World

A visit to a coconut warehouse.

The first sight of a place is seldom just like one's previous idea of it. The Carroll children had seen pictures of Panama and received post cards of it, and for the last week they had been hearing stories and asking questions about the Isthmus and its wonderful waterway. Yet the real place did not look at all as they expected. Lucía's idea of it was rather clearer, but she had never seen it before. When her father had taken her to the United States three years before, they had sailed from Puerto Barrios, a port much farther north.

Everybody was leaning over the rail to get the first sight of land, and almost everybody had something to say about it.

"I shouldn't think those people had maps in their heads," Elizabeth whispered, standing on tiptoe to reach her father's ear. Not far away three or four tourists were trying to decide which way the Panama Canal runs. One man insisted that it ran east and west. Another declared that as South America is not due south of North America, but southeast, the canal must cross the Isthmus

from northeast to southwest. A third said at last, "I'll bet it's neither; it's north and south! Anybody got a map?"

Mr. Carroll had one. The three tourists looked rather foolish when they found that as Colon is farther west than Panama the canal runs from northwest to southeast.

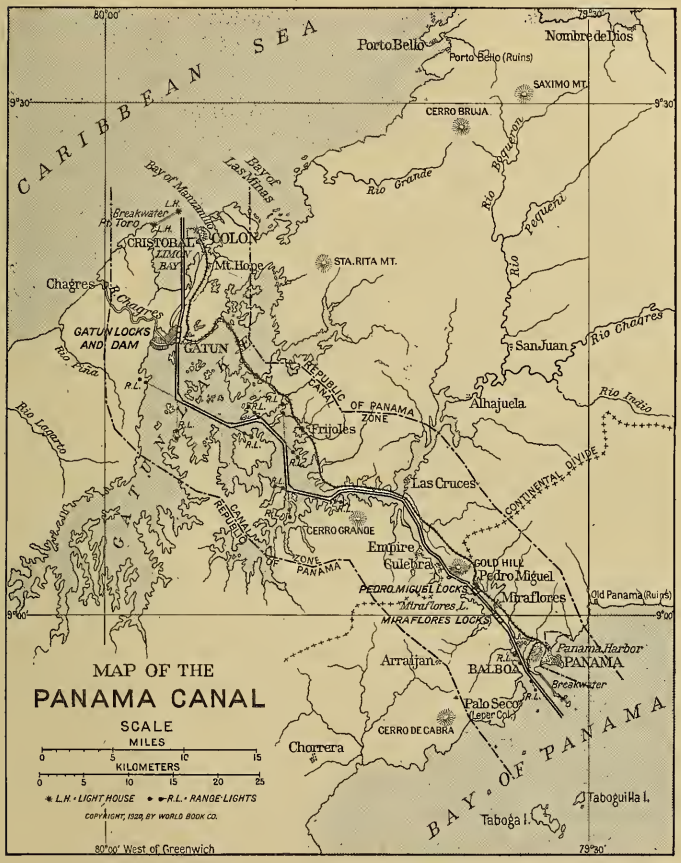
"Shaped like the letter S, isn't it?" observed one. "The country, I mean. Wonder how big it is. This says 32,380 square miles. As big as Belgium."

The three children of the Carroll party looked at each other and grinned. They knew better than that. What is the use of learning the number of square miles in a country and the number of people who live there, if not to know how it compares with other countries?

"I suppose you know all about Panama," remarked Mr. Carroll quizzically, as he returned the map to his pocket and the tourists moved away. When he found his children behaving as if they knew more than others, he was likely to question them to see if they did.

"We know some things about it, anyway," quoth his daughter, stoutly. "We played the geography game all yesterday afternoon. Let's play it now and show father. We aren't near enough to see anything yet."

The game was one their mother had taught them to while away the long hours of a railway journey. They agreed on some country, and each in turn would mention some fact relating to it, beginning immediately after to count up to a given number. If the next player could think of no new fact before the counting was finished, that player was out of the game. At first they had counted to thirty, but it was more exciting to make it ten.



"Panama is three times as big as Belgium," began Billy, "one, two, three —"

"It is almost as big as Maine," put in Elizabeth.

"It has 420,000 people," went on Lucía.

"Highest mountain is 11,000 feet high," said Billy.

"The Chagres River is a hundred miles long," stated Elizabeth.

"The rainy season is from the middle of April until the middle of December," was Lucía's next item.

"Colon has 140 inches of rainfall a year," said Billy.

"Panama has only about 60 inches of rainfall," added Elizabeth.

"The republic of Panama is 425 miles by 70," — from Lucía.

"There are about 13 inhabitants to the square mile," Billy put in.

"The old name of the Isthmus was Darien," Elizabeth recalled this just as her brother counted "nine."

"The chief cities are Colon and Panama," said Lucía.

"Panama has the longest coast line of any country of its size on this hemisphere," observed Billy; "767 miles on the Pacific side and 476 on the Atlantic — as far as from Maine to Florida."

"It can't be!" Elizabeth exclaimed, forgetting the game. "Is it, father?"

Mr. Carroll laughed. "You're a little ahead of me this time," he said, and consulted his guidebook. "But — yes, you're right, Billy."

"Um-m — Morgan and the pirates destroyed Old Panama," Elizabeth recited hurriedly. Billy raised a question this time.

"Is that a geographical fact, father?"

"Allowable, I should say," Mr. Carroll answered.

"Well, you ruled out Lucía when she said Rodrigo de Bastida discovered the coast of Panama, and she challenged me when I said Balboa crossed the Isthmus in twenty-six days and discovered the Pacific Ocean. You said that was history and not geography."

"History and geography are apt to be more or less mixed," remarked Billy's mother.

"But when you play a game it's got to be played according to the rules, or it's no fun," insisted Billy, stubbornly.

"Right, son, and what is more, when you make the rules as you go along, as you seem to be doing now, it's important that they should be right," agreed his father. "You were there yesterday when we were talking about salesmanship. Trade is a game, too — a great game, one of the biggest in the world. And the rules for that have to be made as we go along, in the same way, or the whole business gets into a snarl."

"And then we have a war," said Billy, thoughtfully.

"Sooner or later, in one way or another," said Mr. Carroll. "It may not be with bullets and shrapnel, but unfairness and deceit and treachery always make trouble."

"Well, suppose we let in historical facts after this," Billy suggested. "It will be all the more interesting. Only we shall have to read up on history. Lucía knows it all now."

"I was born here, you know," said Lucía, smiling. "Don't you remember how long it took me to learn the names of all the different States, and who settled them? I didn't have any idea that so much had happened in your country in the last hundred years until I went to school with you."

"I wish that some of the things hadn't happened," sighed Elizabeth. "I don't see what use there is in learning so many dates."

"A date is a label, daughter," said Mr. Carroll. "Ask your mother if it isn't. I must see about the trunks."

"Father means, Betty," said Mrs. Carroll, "that knowing the dates in history helps us to arrange what we know in proper order and see how things connect themselves. Take the story Dr. Macgregor told you about William Paterson. When you know that it happened in 1698, you can see what sort of world it was that William Paterson lived in. It was a world something like the one that Robinson Crusoe knew in his boyhood. Daniel Defoe was thirty-seven years old when the Darien Colony was founded, and people in Europe had been thinking and talking about planting colonies in the New World, when he was a boy. If Defoe knew men who had been traders and colonists and had perhaps been shipwrecked on one of the little West India Islands, you can see how he got the idea for his wonderful description of Crusoe's island. Did you know that it was in this very Caribbean Sea?"

"No!" gasped Betty. "Where?"

"I packed the book with the rest of your library. When you get a chance to read it again, perhaps you can make out."

They were drawing near enough to land to be able to see what it was like, and now the leave-takings from steamer friends and the preparations for landing began.

More than once the remark was heard, "I wonder if it can be any hotter on land than it has been on this boat for the last two days?" Toward the end of the voyage the steamer had been going with the trade wind, and without the strong breeze blowing over the deck the heat of the sun had been truly tropical. The first land in sight was Darien, hills which are seen on the left for some hours before there is any glimpse of Colon. Until

the canal was built, Colon was merely an open roadstead, for it has no natural harbor. Even now ships anchor in this open roadstead, as a place is called which is not too deep for anchoring but is not sheltered by the shore.

A little motor boat flying the United States flag now came out to meet the steamer. A doctor, an immigration officer, and two or three other men, all trim and neat in khaki uniforms, came aboard to examine all the passengers and crew. In this way it was made sure that no one should be detained on account of illness, or for having been in an infected port.

While this was going on, Elizabeth caught at her father's arm as they stood by the rail. "Daddy! Is that a whale? And what are all those ships out there waiting for?"

"That's not a whale, my child; it's one of our submarines. And that open channel you see at the right is the entrance to the Panama Canal. The ships are waiting their turn to go through."

The children gazed in silence at the entrance to the great waterway, and at the waiting ships. This was their first sight of the Panama Canal!

"Why do they call this place Cristobal, father?" asked Elizabeth after a while. "I had thought that it was named Colon."

"It is. When the United States Government took over the strip of territory about ten miles wide, called the Canal Zone, they had to build a town here, and they decided not to rebuild Colon, but to lay out a town of their own. Just over the line, on their own land, they cleared away all the old huts there and built as they liked. That town is Cristobal. There's no fence between

the two, not even any great distance. One side of a certain street is in Colon; the other is in Cristobal."

On leaving the steamer the Carroll party went to the hotel, but there was no keeping the children indoors long.

"What is the weather like here, Robert?" asked Mrs. Carroll, as she unlocked trunks and opened bags.

"Not so hot as at home in July," answered her husband. "In December it is about 79 degrees, and in April, the hottest month, it is about 81. Panama is a little cooler and not so moist. In my old geography this place used to be called Aspinwall, after one of the founders of the Panama Railroad. When I first came here, in 1902, the railroad ran along a narrow, dirty street with little huts at the side. Now the streets are paved, sanitary conditions have been improved by the Government, and good buildings have been constructed."

"Did you hear that old lady from California tell how

Office of Panama Canal, Washington, D.C.

View of the Panama Canal, showing the famous Culebra Cut, now called the Gaillard Cut.

she came here before the railroad was finished?" asked Mrs. Carroll. "At the end of the railroad she had to take a boat and then go on mule-back. She had two babies with her, and was determined to keep them under her eye, but they told her that would be impossible. She finally turned them over to the negro guide, who went by a short cut. She said she never expected to see them again, but they reappeared at the end of the journey as happy as kittens."

"When was that?" asked Billy.

"I don't know exactly," said Mrs. Carroll, "but the railroad was built after gold was discovered in California, and finished in 1855. This old lady's husband was one of the 'Forty-niners,' and she went out to join him after he had made the journey twice. She was only twenty-four, and the children were twins, a year old."

The party soon went out to see Colon. The shipping in Limón Bay at the entrance to the canal was a picturesque sight. A great breakwater lately built improves the harbor. Besides the steamers there were many canoes and small sailboats in which the San Blas Indians had come from the coast to the eastward, to sell coconuts, bananas, and other fruit, beadwork and basket-work.

"Do you suppose these are like the Indians Columbus saw when he landed?" asked Elizabeth, dreamily.

"They won't let a foreigner stay in their villages overnight, although they seem ready enough to trade with us," her father commented, as he filled one of the odd little baskets with different sorts of fruit. "Look, there's the statue of Columbus! Both parts of the town are named for him."

"He had enough different names," remarked Billy.

"His real name was Cristoforo Colombo, for he was

an Italian from Genoa, you know," explained Mrs. Carroll. "When he went to Spain he called himself Cristóbal Colombo, the Spanish form of the same name. Christopher is the English form. Columbus is the Latin form used in the old histories. All the old books of travel in the museums were written in Latin, which every learned man of those days knew. Latin was spoken in colleges and used for writing letters from one country to another. You see, in that way, if a scholar knew his own language and Latin he could talk with any other scholar, anywhere in the world. The accounts of the early voyages have the name in various forms, but the surname is almost always Columbus."

"Your name is the Spanish for Elizabeth, Aunt Isabel," said Lucía, "and when I first came to your house I used to forget and call Betty Isabel too."

"San José is Saint Joseph, and San Francisco is Saint Francis," added Billy. "Those old explorers were always naming places in that way."

"Gracias a Dios means Thanks to God," said his mother, "and I remember how horrified some of my friends there were when tourists called it 'Gracious.' Los Angeles was once Santa María de los Angeles. These beautiful old names are full of the history of the country, and it does seem a pity to pronounce them carelessly. The places were often named for the patron saint of the discoverer, or the saint on whose day they were discovered or founded, in the hope that the saint would watch over them and bless them. I haven't a doubt that many of the good men and women who lived there found this thought a great help."

"It must have seemed strange at first," reflected Elizabeth, trying to imagine living in this strange place, with

no letters, no stores, and no food except what could be found at hand. "Why, I never knew that coconuts grew in Panama. I thought they grew on coral islands, around lagoons."

"They do," answered her father. "But they like a sandy soil with air stirring, wherever it is warm enough for them. This is probably the best coconut country in the world, except the Philippines. The long coast line is in their favor, and so is the climate. One can buy land here for from two to five dollars an acre, set the trees about twenty feet apart, and after seven years they will begin to bear nuts. They bear for several months in the year, and I have counted as many as a hundred big nuts on one palm. They used to be called monkey nuts, and if you look at the end you'll see why."

The shaggy brown ball really did look like the queer little face of a monkey.

"Can we drink coconut juice as the Swiss Family Robinson did?" asked Billy, thirsty with the thought of it.

Mr. Carroll said something to a fruit seller who was standing by. He smiled, took them to his warehouse a little way off, and treated the children to a perfectly new drink. For this the coconuts are gathered green, put in cold storage a few days, and then opened. The juice is not yet milky, but colorless, slightly sweet, and delicate in flavor.

"Here are some facts for your geography game," said Mr. Carroll. "Ten thousand acres of coconut palms were planted here in 1914, and more are planted each year. Whittier's poem on the palm will tell you some of the things coconuts are used for, but we have found some new uses for them since he wrote that. Raw nuts

are made into the desiccated coconut the grocer sells for cake and pudding. Copra is the meat of the dried kernel. Poonac, which is the refuse after the oil is taken out, is used as food for live stock, and the oil is used in soaps and medicines. Some people like the substitutes for butter and lard made from it and think them especially digestible. The fiber of the woody bark, which is called 'coir,' is made into doormats, rope, mops, fancy baskets, and other things. The trees grow best near sea level. They need plenty of water, but will not grow in standing water. Flowers and ripe nuts are seen on the trees at the same time."

"Don't you like our geography game, father?" asked Elizabeth.

"Very much," her father assured her. "It helps you to remember what you learn, and what is more important, to have the knowledge at hand when you need it. I don't want you to go about the world pouring out information, but I should like to have you able to remember what you hear and repeat it accurately, and not to be dependent on a reference book."

Office of Panama Canal, Washington, D.C.

A steamship on its way to the Pacific Ocean, in the Miraflores Locks, Panama Canal.

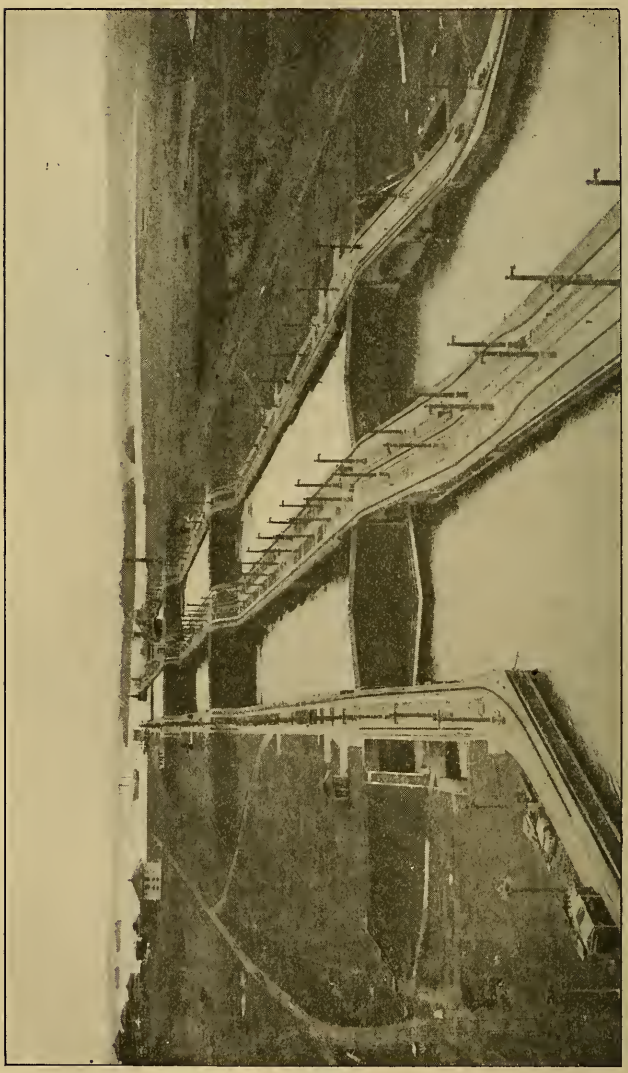
CHAPTER FIVE

The Great Waterway

"We can go to the city of Panama by train, or through the canal," Mr. Carroll announced that night at dinner. "Which shall it be?"

He was not surprised when every one voted for the canal. As Elizabeth said, they could take trains anywhere, but they couldn't go through a ship canal except where there was one.

Before beginning the journey, however, they went in a small launch to Gatun Lake, and saw the big dam, the spillway, and the locks. By the help of Mr. Carroll's explanations and the diagrams in the guidebook, even Elizabeth, although engineering was not in her line, came to understand the workings of the great waterway.



Office of Panama Canal, Washington, D.C.

General view of the Gatun Locks, Panama Canal, looking south.

A lock is a section of a canal or stream closed in by gates. When a boat reaches a lock, the gate is opened to let it in and closed behind it. Then the water is let in from the next gate, if the boat is going upstream, until the level on which it rests inside the closed space is the same as that of the stream or canal beyond. Coming downstream, the level is lowered in the lock by allowing the water to run out. In this way the raising of great ships from one level to another is done by the water itself.

In the Panama Canal the gates are worked by electricity, and the side walls are as high as a six-story apartment house. Mr. Carroll pointed out the twin locks — like a double-track railway — which made it possible for ships to be passing in both directions at the same time. Each lock is 1000 feet in length and 110 feet in width. The concrete and cement used — so an old gentleman on the boat told them — would cover a road around the earth twenty feet wide to a depth of six inches. If, owing to a flood or some such cause, the water should be unmanageable, it could be controlled by a second pair of gates. There are also great chains, lowered to the bottom so that the ship could pass over them, which could be lifted and used as brakes in case of need. On reaching the second and then the third lock the ship would pass through in the same way as in the first. Then ships could go under their own steam through the lake and what used to be known as the Culebra Cut, now called the Gaillard Cut. This is the highest part of the canal, where the ship is carried through the hills far above sea level.

The ship on which the party embarked the next day took about twelve hours to reach the Pacific. After passing the locks, it went about nine miles under steam

through Gatun Lake to Pedro Miguel. Here it entered another lock, and was lowered about thirty feet to a small lake, Miraflores, where it entered another lock and then another, through which it was lowered fifty-five feet to the level of the Pacific Ocean, and passed through a channel with a width at bottom of five hundred feet, to the harbor and the open sea. Ships are towed through the locks by electric engines called "mules," but pass through the lakes under their own steam.

"I don't wonder people thought William Paterson was crazy two hundred years ago to talk of a canal here," remarked Billy, as he looked at the massive walls. The dreams of the Scotch adventurer so far in advance of his time had impressed the boy.

"Cortés thought of one a long time before that," said Lucía. "The Aztecs built great city walls and wonderful roads before the Spaniards came."

"Canals were built with a great deal of skill even in ancient times," Mr. Carroll said thoughtfully. "If they had needed a ship canal, perhaps they would have found a way to build it. But their wooden ships were small. An old sea captain told me that it is impossible to build a wooden ship beyond a certain length. It wouldn't have cost $400,000,000 to build a canal for Cortés."

"Did this cost as much as that?" asked Elizabeth.

"One authority says $375,000,000," replied her father. "Perhaps that does not include the work they had to do to stop the slides."

It was hot and tedious in places, going through the canal, and Mrs. Carroll suggested a game.

"Let us try to tell the story of the canal," she proposed. "We have all been reading about it; now let's

see what we remember. Keep time for us, Robert, and let each one have half a minute. Any one who can't remember within that time what comes next, drops out of the game."

They drew bits of paper for the first turn. It fell to Billy.

"The Panama Railroad was granted the right to build a canal," began Billy, carefully, "and they finished the railroad, but didn't even make a beginning on the canal. A great many surveys were made between 1872 and 1897. In 1879 a Frenchman started to build a sea-level canal."

"How short a half minute is!" sighed his sister. "Well — a — there was a Frenchman named De Lesseps who had built the Suez Canal. He thought he could build a sea-level canal, so he began at the Pacific side. But he found it was too unhealthy for anybody to live there even long enough to work. Now, mother!"

"The money gave out," went on Mrs. Carroll, "and in 1887 the sea-level plan was changed to a lock plan, but people seemed to have less and less faith in the scheme, and the company finally failed. The managers were arrested on the charge of fraud, and some of them were convicted. De Lesseps was among these, although he was eighty-six years old and probably innocent."

"In 1894," continued Mr. Carroll, "a new company began work, bought the French rights and materials, and secured control of this Canal Zone. The United States paid $10,000,000 in gold and $250,000 a year to Panama. At that time Panama was a part of Colombia. Colombia's government would not agree to the treaty giving the United States the right to build the canal, and Panama revolted and formed a republic, with which the United States made its treaty."

Mr. Carroll had talked rather fast to get this into the half minute. Lucía went on:

"No private individuals or traders can settle in the Canal Zone or own land," she said rather hesitatingly. "I think it is what you call a military reservation. The United States has done a great deal to make this zone healthy."

"I think we have covered the history of the canal pretty well," laughed Mrs. Carroll, "for the time we had to do it."

"Father," said Billy, "how do they arrange what the ships have to pay going through the canal? Do all the countries pay alike?"

"There was a great deal of argument about that," his father answered. "The treaty between the United States and Great Britain in 1901 provided for the use of the canal on equal terms by ships of all nations. In 1912 the United States passed the Panama Canal Act giving special rights to certain kinds of shipping of our own country. England claimed that this was against the treaty of 1901, which is called the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty because it was the work of our Secretary of State, John Hay, and Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British Ambassador. President Wilson requested Congress to repeal that part of the Panama Canal Act which made a difference between American and other shipping, and this was finally done.

"Each vessel pays according to the space allowed for its cargo and passengers, $1.20 per net canal ton, plus $1.20 per hundred cubic feet of deck load, which is usually a little more than the number of tons of cargo. The surveyor of any port in the United States can measure a vessel and make out its certificate. If a ship comes

with its certificate all prepared, it can be passed and be ready to go through the canal in an hour or two. If the captain has all his papers ready, the force here at the canal can measure vessels in from 24 to 36 hours. A set of the rules for measurement is furnished to every foreign country which has officials who can do this work. You see the payment is made according to the space the cargo and passengers occupy rather than by weight. A steamer rated at 5378 canal tons pays a toll of $6453.60."

"Seems like a lot of money," commented Billy.

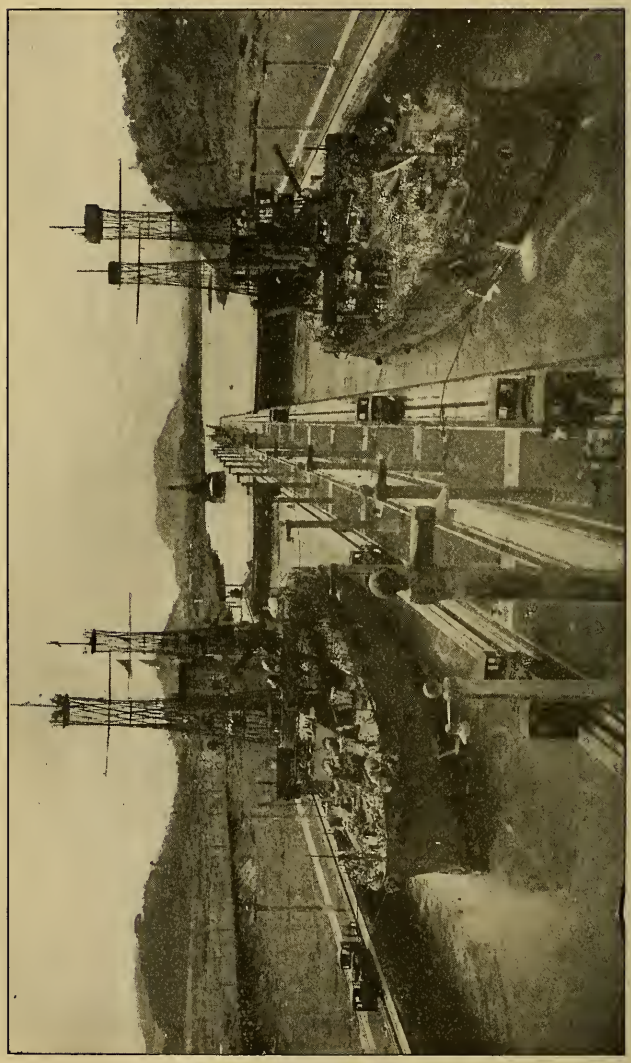
"It would cost more to unload and load again and lose the time needed to do it, or to go round the Horn. There is a charge for towing — ten cents a Panama Canal ton. There is a different rate for vessels with no cargo or passengers. A government pilot is always on board while the ship is passing through the canal, to advise the captain and take charge through the locks; but except when passing through the locks the captain is responsible. If no freight or passengers are discharged at either end, there is no charge for the pilot."

By this time the steamer was out of its narrow quarters and the children were ready to amuse themselves looking over the waters of the lake. But that afternoon they were ready for another game.

"Let's play menagerie," proposed Elizabeth.

"What's that?" asked her father, with an amused glance over the top of his magazine.

"You begin by naming some kind of animal or bird, and count ten, and whoever can think of another one of the same kind can name that and start counting, and so on till somebody counts up to ten without being interrupted. Then that person counts one point and starts with some other bird or animal, and the one who gets



Office of Panama Canal, Washington, D.C.

United States battleships in the lower chambers of the Miraflores Locks.

three points first wins. I'll begin this time. The animals of Panama: Monkey, one, two, three —"

"Tapir," said her father, and reached the middle of his count before Billy thought of "deer." Lucía was all ready with "wildcat." Wild hog, rats, mice, and various other animals were mentioned, but Lucía won that point.

"The fish of Panama:" she began. "Corvina, — one, two —"

"Tarpon," said Mr. Carroll. "Mackerel," ventured Billy. "Red snapper," said his father, who had the advantage of having fished these waters. He counted ten before any one thought of another fish, and the pelicans fishing along the shores of the canal furnished a suggestion.

"The birds of Panama: Pelican, one, two —"

Among the birds the quetzal, humming-bird, heron, and many others were mentioned, and the contest was quite spirited. Billy, who finally won, started a list of reptiles, and Mr. Carroll declared that he was prepared to win the game on insects. But by that time dinner was announced.

Nearing Panama, Billy recalled the fact that Vasco Nuñez de Balboa was looking at the Gulf of Panama when he got his first sight of the Pacific.

"What ever became of Balboa?" he asked. "I don't remember."

"Did he cross the Isthmus here?" asked Elizabeth.

"Now, Betty," said Mrs. Carroll, "it said in your history that he climbed a mountain and saw the ocean from its summit. How could that be if he followed this route?

"No; he started from the first Spanish settlement on the Isthmus, Santa María la Antigua, in Darien, not

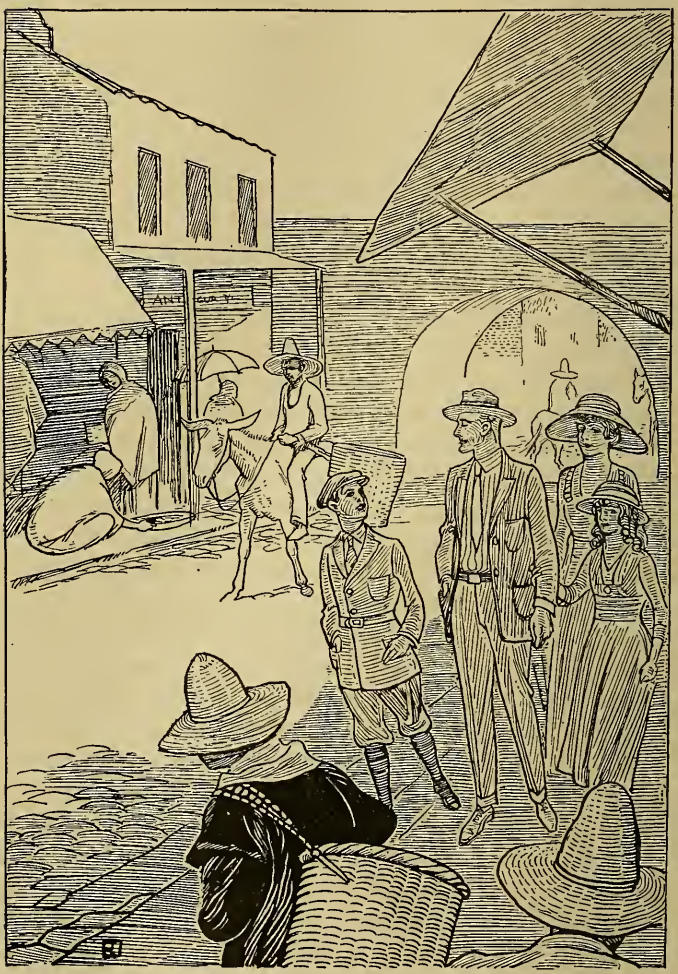
very far from the place Dr. Macgregor showed you where Paterson's colony was. While he was crossing the mountains, the Indians told him that from the top of the next peak he could see the South Sea of which he had heard from them. He went alone because he was not at all sure that it was the sea; it might be an inland lake or a swamp. If so, he did not wish any of his men to see his disappointment. When he saw that it was really the ocean, he knelt and prayed, and then beckoned to his men and they rushed up to join him. He sent out three parties of twelve men each when they neared the shore, under Alonso Martín, Francisco Pizarro, and Juan de Escaray. After two days' search Martín and his companions came out on the shore and saw two Indian canoes drawn up on the beach. When the tide came in and floated them, Martín jumped into one and called on the rest to witness that he was the first Spaniard to sail on those waters. Then, as you remember, Balboa came and took possession in the name of the King and Queen of Spain. It was the feast day of St. Michael the Archangel, and he therefore named the gulf San Miguel. You will find it over here to the southeast of us. All the Spaniards took up some of the water in their hands and tasted it, to make sure it was salt. They met some Indians and made the acquaintance of their chief Tumaco, who brought them tribute of 614 pesos of gold and a basinful of pearls, 240 of them very large. The chief could not understand why they were so overjoyed to see the pearls. If the pearls had been oysters he would have understood it, he said, but no one could eat pearls. He sent out his pearl fishers to get more for the white men, and in four days they gathered ninety-six ounces!

"When Balboa wanted to go out on the ocean, Tumaco took him out in his biggest and finest canoe, with oars inlaid with pearl of an inferior kind. Tumaco also told the Spaniards that a great nation existed far to the south, very wealthy, sailing in great ships and using beasts of burden; and he molded in clay a rough image of a llama, which the Spaniards thought might be a new kind of camel. I suppose this was the first that Pizarro ever heard of Peru, for he was one of those who listened with Balboa.

"Balboa had made this journey in the rainy season, without losing a man, and made friends with every cacique chief along the road. If he had only got his letters about the discovery off to the King a little sooner, he might have been the conqueror of Peru, instead of Pizarro, and the history of South America would have been quite different.

"But the King, not knowing of the great discovery Balboa had made, sent Pedro Arias de Avila as the new governor of the colony, with general orders to call Balboa to account. He is generally called Pedrarias in Spanish histories and Davila in English books. He was provided with a fleet of seventeen or eighteen ships and 1500 men and told to make every effort to find the South Sea. You can imagine the disgust of the King when a few days after this fleet sailed, Balboa's messenger arrived with pearls and gold and the news that Balboa with his little company had found the Sea already.

"Balboa was generous enough to welcome Pedrarias and tell him all he could of the country, and the wicked old rascal took advantage of all this to abuse the Indians, and finally lured Balboa to Acla and had him arrested. Pizarro, of all people in the world, was sent out to arrest him, and Balboa exclaimed: 'What is this? You are



"They strolled next morning about the quaint old town."

not wont to come out in this fashion to receive me!' Pedrarias manufactured a charge of treason and had Balboa condemned and beheaded. And that was how it came about that Balboa did not discover the land of the Incas. He was just on the point of sailing when Pedrarias had him murdered. But after all, Pedrarias got very little good of his brutality. The Indians rose against him, his followers died of sickness, and the settlement in Darien had to be abandoned. So you see there were all sorts among the conquistadores."

The end of the journey came a few minutes after the end of the story, and they found themselves looking out upon the very waters where Balboa was launching his little wooden ships when he was recalled by the treacherous Pedrarias. In the Gulf of Panama are the Pearl Islands from which Tumaco's divers brought the pearls that were sent to Spain in that historic year, 1513.

"Mother," said Elizabeth, as they strolled next morning about the quaint old town, "Mr. O'Keefe said there was a church here built partly of mother of pearl. Do you think we could find it?"

"You are looking at it now," said her mother. "The two towers of the cathedral are crusted with mother of pearl from the Pearl Islands."

"I wonder how big those pearls were that the chief gave Balboa?" queried Billy.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Carroll, "but Columbus brought Queen Isabella a beautiful pearl weighing 300 grains. You can imagine that it must have been a big one, for a pearl found off the coast of Chiriqui weighed 42 carats — a carat is $3\frac{1}{2}$ grains — and was about the size of a quail's egg. The Chiriqui pearl was a dark one and sold for $5000."

"I didn't know they had dark pearls," said Billy.

"Empress Eugénie had a famous necklace of black pearls, for which she had a fancy," said Mrs. Carroll. "There are rose-colored ones. Orient pearls are those which are perfectly round, and baroque pearls are irregular ones like that in your little pin, Betty."

Mr. Carroll came along just then and took them into some of the shops, to buy post cards, a souvenir or two, and a Panama hat for Mrs. Carroll. Many of the shops are kept by Chinese. In a little Spanish place the clerk used black-bordered paper to wrap their parcel. A member of the firm had lately died and for a month all parcels would be wrapped in this paper.

As the streets grew quieter, the Carroll party followed the example of the townspeople. Panama is a place in which everybody rests between eleven in the morning and two in the afternoon.

"The Spaniards drew their bows and picked up stones."

CHAPTER SIX

On the Trail of Columbus

After a stay of two days in Panama, the Carroll party returned to Colon, where Señor Bastido rejoined them. He had been attending to some affairs of his own, and in accordance with a telegram from Mr. Carroll had already made arrangements for them all to take a fruit company's steamer up the coast to Limón, the seaport of Costa Rica.

"I wish we could go to San Salvador and see where Columbus landed," said Elizabeth, rather wistfully, as they stood on the deck of the boat watching the hurry-scurry on the wharves. "I can't think of one single thing I know about Costa Rica, and I know lots about the West Indies."

"Some day," said her father, "we'll make that trip and see everything that is to be seen. In the meantime,

don't forget that Señor Bastido is a professor of history in a college down here. Perhaps he can tell you something interesting about this voyage we're making today."

Elizabeth felt that it was doubtful. When she was a very tiny girl, she and Billy had listened to the wonderful story of the ships like great white-winged birds which had come to the beautiful strange islands in the Caribbean, and of the people coming down to the shore to wonder and worship. They had "played Columbus" over and over again. She couldn't imagine anything so like a fairy tale happening on the coast of Costa Rica. If anything interesting had happened there, why wasn't it in the histories?

However, it was very pleasant sitting on the deck and looking out over the blue, sparkling waters. A seabird, wheeling and dipping on strong, sure wings above and around the steamer, came so near that they could see his bright, inquisitive eyes.

"That bird must like us," observed Elizabeth. "He's been following us all the way from Colon."

"He's after the scraps the cook throws away," said Billy, the matter-of-fact.

Lucía had been chattering in Spanish to her father as fast as her tongue would go, but they came up from the other side of the deck at this moment.

"How should you like," asked Señor Bastido, smiling at the children as they watched the bird skimming over the waves, "to live in a place where the wild birds were not at all afraid of you?"

"I guess that must be the kind of place Dr. Macgregor told about, 'where all the birds in Gaelic sang,'" said Billy, shrewdly. "There isn't any such place now, is there?"

"Not on any of the steamer routes, I am afraid," answered the Central American. "I once visited a very tiny island, when I was yachting with a friend, where men hardly ever went and there were no cats. The birds had found it out, and they nested there year after year. They had not the least fear of us, and it was delightful. It used to be so in Costa Rica."

"It did?" Elizabeth's eyes widened in amazement. "Didn't anybody live there then?"

"Only the Indians, and they were very kind to the birds, and did not allow them to be killed unless for some special reason. Some kinds were never harmed at all. Even now there are more than five hundred different kinds of birds in Costa Rica, of all colors and forms and sizes, and every kind of cunning habit that a bird can have. There are parrots that jabber all the time, canaries that sing all the time, and birds that seem never to express themselves in any bird language. There are tiny humming-birds darting about among the flowers, and great eagles flying from mountain to mountain. There are also a great many beautiful species of butterflies. Famous Paris dressmakers import them and get suggestions for colors and designs from them. Butterfly jewelry is made from them, — I have seen some in New York.

"Until the Spaniards came the birds were even more tame than most pets are, for they did not know that men would ever harm them. I suppose you know that we are sailing over the very seas that Columbus sailed on his fourth voyage."

"No — are we really? When was that?" Elizabeth's face lighted up in sudden pleasure. It did seem, after all, that not all the interesting things had got into the histories.

"In 1502, ten years after his discovery of the New World. When he and his men landed, the birds flew about the ships quite fearlessly, as if they wanted to make friends. Then what did the Spaniards do but draw their bows, and pick up stones, and kill as many birds as they could! Those that flew away probably told their friends and relatives what had happened, for in a short time the birds became wild. They not only feared the Spaniards, but the Indians as well, and this made the Indians very indignant against the strangers. It is said that this was the first reason for their hating the Spaniards and trying to drive them away. When Columbus tried to found a settlement in Costa Rica the Indians destroyed it, and the Admiral lost many men and one of his ships. Finally he sailed for home."

Pan American Union

A scene in the town of Colon.

"I thought the Spaniards had guns," said Billy. "They had cannon, didn't they?"

"The ships carried cannon, but the earliest form of the musket, called the matchlock, was first used at the battle of Pavia in 1525," explained Señor Bastido. "The crossbow was strung by being wound up with a sort of crank, and its iron-headed bolts would go through almost anything short of steel armor. The Genoese were always clever crossbowmen, and the kind of adventurers Columbus had with him would probably use the weapons they were accustomed to. With their metal helmets and body armor and their superior weapons the strangers looked upon the Indians as ignorant savages fit only to be slaves, but they found that even without any advantages the Indians were good at fighting. Spain never really controlled the land until 1565, when Juan Vázquez de Coronado was appointed governor. At that time the country was called Nueva Cartago. Bartolomé de las Casas, Bishop of Chiapas, was a good friend to the Indians. He managed to make them understand that all Spaniards were not cruel or treacherous, and that it would be better to be friends with them than to go on fighting. But wasn't it a pity that the cruelty of a few thoughtless, greedy men should spoil a friendship like that between the people and the birds?"

"I don't suppose the men who killed the birds meant any harm, at that," observed Mr. Carroll. "Neither do boys who kill off our birds and thereby let the insects eat up our crops. But if I remember rightly these Costa Rican Indians were really quite civilized in their way."

"Not so very far behind those who conquered them," assented Señor Bastido. "In 1500 Europe had no china, glassware, carpets, window glass, carriages, forks, or

books in common use, and their cloth was woven on small hand-looms. These Indians made pottery, cooking dishes, and jewelry, carved their furniture and altars, and wove cloth of bright colors. They had cotton cloth from cotton which they cultivated on their plantations, while Europe had only wool and linen. Their manners were gentle and their ways intelligent. I think they compared very well with the peasants of the Old World."

"Did Columbus do anything else on that voyage?" asked Elizabeth. "Did he sail right along this coast where we are?"

"Yes, but he was coming eastward. He first sighted land somewhere on the coast of Honduras. There he met with two trading canoes, one of them eight feet wide and as long as a galley — it was rowed by twenty Indians. The chief, or cacique, sat under a thatched canopy in the stern, with his family. The canoe was loaded with all sorts of things the Spaniards had never seen before. There were cloaks and tunics of cotton finely worked and dyed, hatchets, cups, and bells of copper, stone knives, wooden swords edged with sharp flints, and dishes of stone, clay, and wood. There were also stores of bread made of maize and a kind of beer also made from it, and cacao beans for food and money, which the Spaniards took for a new kind of almond. Columbus did not harm these Indians, and gave them some things in exchange for their goods. He took on board his ship one old chief named Giumba, who seemed to be the wisest, in order to learn something about the country, and later sent him home to his own country with some presents.

"Just the other side of Cape Gracias a Dios in Honduras, Columbus found Indians who made such large holes

Indian women of Central America, showing native dress. Streets at certain times are full of such women carrying home food.

in their ear lobes that he called that part La Costa de la Oreja — The Coast of the Ear.

"As he sailed farther along the coast, Columbus saw monkeys and alligators, which made him think he must be somewhere about the Ganges, as he had read of similar scenes in the travels of Marco Polo. At one place — some think it was Bluefields in Nicaragua — Indians swam out to the ship with cotton garments and ornaments of pale gold to trade. Columbus gave them some presents, but would not trade, because he hoped they would bring something more valuable; and when the Spaniards landed they found all the gifts he had given them neatly tied up, lying on the beach. They didn't want anything except in fair trade. I am inclined to think the place was Puerto Limón in Costa Rica."

"Why, that's where we are going!" cried Elizabeth; "isn't it, father?"

"It is," replied Mr. Carroll, smiling. "What's your reason for that opinion, Professor?"

"For one thing, it answers to the description. There is a small island near the shore, a river, and mountains in the background. However, that might be said of several other ports in the Caribbean. But both the Admiral and his son Fernando say that after this adventure he reached Almirante Bay in one day's sail of twenty-two leagues, or about fifty-five miles. His ships were in bad condition, owing to the teredo or shipworm, and he sailed only by day in order to examine the coast. I do not believe he could have made Almirante Bay in a single day from either Bluefields or Greytown. We shall be there ourselves very shortly. You will see by this map that there are islands and channels through which Columbus would sail cautiously. The bay is named for him — Admiral Bay, in English."

"What happened then?" asked Billy, as the three children finished passing around the map of the steamer route over which Columbus had gone exploring.

"He anchored in the bay and sent boats to the islands to see if they could find signs of any gold in the neighborhood. They were told of a better place for trading a few miles farther on, and the next day they found their way through a narrow channel to a larger bay now called Chiriqui Lagoon. Here they found Indians who wore many gold ornaments in the shape of eagles, frogs, and other animals and plates, hung around the neck, which Columbus took for mirrors of gold, as they may have been. The pilot said afterward that eighty canoes gathered about the Spanish ships in one place, all eager to trade."

"What did he give them for their gold?" inquired Billy.

"The things they liked best were needles and hawk

bells. In those days hawking was a popular sport, and the hawk, or rather falcon, was fitted with a tiny bell on the foot, so that the hunter could tell where it was. Otherwise he would lose his bird if it happened to alight in tall grass or thick woodlands. These little bells were easily packed, and the Indians were delighted with them."

"Where was it that the birds came down to the ships?" asked Elizabeth.

"Probably along the coast we are coming to. There was trouble with the Indians at several places after they left Chiriqui Lagoon. It may have been due to that news traveling along the coast from one village to another; no one can be sure."

Different styles of Maya textiles. *Huipils* or waists are worn as shown by the girl in the picture.

"I wonder if he had weather as beautiful as this?" suggested Mrs. Carroll. "It is absolutely perfect."

"We know that he did not," Señor Bastido smiled. "In fact, he had so serious a time of it that he called this the 'Coast of the Changing Winds.' He had had such a hard voyage thus far with head winds all the way that he thought he would run back to Veragua and see if he could find out anything about the gold mines he had heard of there. Then the wind changed and there was a gale from the west. It was a little earlier in the season than this — about mid-December. I have his very words here in my notebook, I think — yes, this is his account of it, written to the King and Queen:

"For nine days I wandered as one lost, without hope of salvation. Never have eyes seen the sea so high and ugly, or so much foam. The wind was not available for making headway, and did not permit us to run for any shelter. There I was, held in that sea turned into blood and seething like a caldron upon a huge fire. So awesome a sky was never seen; for a day and a night it blazed like a furnace, vomiting forth sheets and bolts of lightning until, after each one, I looked to see whether it had not carried away my masts and sails. With such frightful fury they fell upon us that we all believed the ships would founder. During the whole time the water never ceased falling from the skies; not in what would be called rain, but rather as though another Deluge were upon us. My people were already so worn out that they courted death, to be free from such continued martyrdom. The ships, for the second time, lost boats, anchors, cables, and sails, and were leaking. When it was our Lord's pleasure, I sought Puerto Gordo and there repaired as well as I could.

"The port which Columbus named Puerto Gordo is supposed to be Limón Bay in Panama, from which we started this morning in leaving Colon. According to the account of Fernando, the son of Columbus, who was

with him on this voyage, it was three leagues east of the mouth of the Chagres River. He says that the Indians called this port Huiva, and that they lived in huts in the trees like birds, laying sticks across from bough to bough and building on them. The Spaniards thought they did this for fear of griffins. You know in those days people believed in all sorts of curious creatures. Possibly they took some great tropical lizard for a griffin. But I see that we are nearing Bocas del Toro."

"Some adventures," commented Billy. "Nine days getting from here to Colon — whew!"

"Bocas del Toro — mouth of the bull," said Mrs. Carroll. "I wonder how it got that queer name?"

"Bocas means port as well as mouth — and mouth is an old word for port in English," explained Señor Bastido. "There is a cliff as you come into the bay that looks from one point like a bull lying down. The name dates from the very earliest times. Some day this will be the eastern terminal of the railway line from David. I have a friend who is confident that Costa Rica will some day be a resort for tourists from both North and South America. In that case Almirante Bay may be as famous as the Bay of Naples."

The *chirimoya* or *anona*, sometimes called the custard apple. This fruit is grown throughout Central America.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A Plantation in Costa Rica

Limón, the seaport of Costa Rica, is a good deep-water port convenient for shipping, with about 15,000 people. But it is low, it is damp, it is hot, and it is dirty. The only interesting thing about it to the Carroll children was that Columbus had once landed there and made gifts to admiring Indians. As it was, Elizabeth said that she had never before known what people meant by feeling "boiling hot," and Billy stated that he felt "like a wet rag."

Señor Bastido and Lucía were going on at once to San José with friends, and after Mr. Carroll had attended to some affairs for his company in Limón the Carrolls would follow.

"We aren't going to stay here long, are we, mother?" queried Elizabeth.

"Not unless you would like to visit a banana plantation," answered her mother. "Your father says we can go on with the others if we like, but old Mr. Bradford, whom we visited when I was here before, has asked us to come out and spend the day."

Billy and Elizabeth decided instantly for the plantation.

It was not a long journey by rail to Mr. Bradford's estate, which was between Limón and Bocas del Toro. The children felt that they were really now in the tropics.

"Did Columbus see real monkeys and alligators?" asked Elizabeth, with her fascinated eyes on the green tropical world outside. "Or did he only think he did?"

"He must have seen them," replied her mother. "On the old maps the Chagres River is marked Río Lagartos. The Spaniards called the creature *el lagarto*, — the lizard, — and that is where we get the word 'alligator.' I suppose none of them had ever seen a crocodile, although Columbus seems to have known about them. But they knew all about lizards."

"Did bananas grow wild here then?" asked Billy.

"Not wild; the Indians used to cultivate them. My mother used to tell me that she was a grown woman before she ever saw a banana, and now nearly ten million bunches are shipped in a single year from this little country of Costa Rica. Two thirds go to our country, and the rest to England."

"How do they keep them from spoiling?" asked Billy, with sudden interest; he had never thought of that before.

"You will have to ask Mr. Bradford; he has probably forgotten more than I ever knew about bananas," answered Mrs. Carroll. "He was born on the next farm to my grandfather's in Maine, but he has lived here for

more than thirty years without once going back. That is his house; you can just see the roofs of the buildings through the trees."

The lean, rugged face of the old man looked odd among the tropical shrubs and blossoms of his gardens, and still odder was the Maine accent which he had never lost in all this time. Yet he seemed quite at home in this country next door to the equator, and before long he had made them feel at home as well.

"How did I happen to settle down here?" he said presently. "Lots of people have asked me that. Why, I wasn't more than a year or two older than you are, son, when I first got a glimpse of this very coast. I was a cabin boy on my uncle's ship when he put in at Bocas del Toro to see if 'twould pay to take on a cargo of bananas. He was a Cape Cod man, and Captain Baker of his town had brought some up to New York from Jamaica the year before — in 1870. That was the first time bananas were ever sold to any profit in the United States.

"My uncle — Cap'n Nate, we called him; his name was Nathan Thatcher — knew about this coast down here, and he had an idea it was the right land for bananas. Like most o' the old Maine sea-captains he knew more or less about farming. He took some to Boston that voyage, but they didn't keep, and time they got to market a tarantula that had nested in one of the bunches came out, pretty nearly the size of a teacup, and scared folks into fits. Uncle Nate never really lost faith in his idea, though, and neither did I. I saved up my money and he lent me a little more, and by and by I came down here and started my plantation on this very spot."

"What did you do first?" asked Billy, eagerly.

"We-ell, the first thing I had to do was to clear away

"He seemed quite at home in this country next door to the equator."

the jungle. You can't turn your back for five minutes here without a thicket growing up as high as your head. My men went out last year with machetes and cleared a new plantation and found an old Spanish wall half buried in there. Built of reef-rock it was, that you find under the water all along the coast here, almost as light as pumice stone and easy to work, but hardens up after a while till a cannon wouldn't make a dent in it, I guess. The mortar they used was nearly as hard. I wish I had their recipe. We had to dynamite some of it to get it out of our way. I expect it was built in the old governors' time by poor Indian slaves' labor.

"After the ground is clear I plant my banana sprouts about six feet apart. They don't take long to grow, and each tree bears one bunch. Then the plant dies, but meanwhile new shoots or scions have sprung up around it and these begin to bear."

"It must look beautiful when the fruit is all ripe and yellow, on the trees," observed Elizabeth.

"Maybe it would if it stayed there to get ripe," answered the old planter. "We always pick the bunches green."

"What for?" inquired Billy.

"Pick your fruit when it's just grown and not ripe if you mean to ship it North and have it fit to sell," said Mr. Bradford. "I shouldn't like to see a shipload of bananas come into New York that had been shipped ripe from any port in this latitude. Even the fruit we use here is picked green. If we left the bunch on the tree, it would attract birds and insects and the first of the bananas to ripen would split open and none of it would be fit to eat."

The planter stopped a passing laborer and took a small

cluster of bananas from his load. "These are the little fig bananas; you don't get them in your markets; but try them and see if they aren't the best you ever ate."

The Carrolls agreed with him. "I think all fruit tastes more delicious where it grows," said Mrs. Carroll. "Still, I should like to see more tropical fruits come into our markets."

"There's been a good beginning made," said Mr. Bradford. "When I was a boy we had only oranges, and those hardly ever except at Christmas. Maybe some day chirimoyas and zapotas will be as common in the North as oranges are now. I hear the avocado is cheaper than it used to be there. Some people call it the alligator pear, I suppose because it isn't a pear and grows on a tree where an alligator couldn't reach it. There is an alligator apple, a kind of custard-apple, that they like, but it's not fit for human food. However, I rather think bananas can be raised cheaper than most other things here."

"How many are there on a bunch?" asked Billy.

"The biggest bunch I ever cut had three hundred, but I never got another nearly as big."

"And you get three for five at the grocery," added Elizabeth. "I mean we buy three for five cents."

"I suppose on an average," said Mr. Bradford, "it costs about ninety-five cents to grow a bunch of bananas and send it to your market, and the importer calls a dollar a fair price for selling. We sort them into 'firsts' and 'seconds.' Bunches growing nine hands or over are firsts and those from seven to nine hands seconds. If they are less than seven hands, they're not worth shipping. A bunch like that one up there will weigh about eighty pounds."

Pan American Union

A great plantation in Costa Rica, devoted to raising bananas, one of the principal crops of Central America.

The children were gazing up at the great waving leaves nearly twenty feet above them, when Billy asked suddenly, "Is that a plant or a tree?"

"For some time after I started raising bananas I didn't know," the old man answered with a chuckle. "You see, when I was a boy we didn't get a chance to go to school after we were big enough to be doing something else, and a cabin boy or a mate isn't likely to have many books. Which would you think?"

Billy went closer to the tree. "I don't know. The leaves look like a plant, and it hasn't any bark. But I didn't know a plant could be so big."

"It is a plant. One of those botany professors came here and stayed with me for six months once, on some business for the Department of Agriculture, and he told me things about bananas that I hadn't ever known. Maybe I told him one or two that he hadn't known.

"You know the plantain that grows beside the road at home? That's a kind of poor relation to this banana tree. The base of the leaf wraps round the stem here just like a plantain's. The shoots don't grow as a sapling does. You know you can cut your name on the bark of a young tree and find it there years afterward, because the tree grows from the outside in. You find rings inside to show the number of years it has lived. This banana plant grows the other way — from the inside out, putting on layer after layer. You can actually see it grow sometimes. I've watched a banana stalk shoot up two or three inches in a few minutes, and leaves unfolding from the center of the stalk inside of thirty-six hours. Then comes the big, heart-shaped, scaly bud that opens into a cluster of blossoms."

"I suppose you have your troubles as the farmers do,"

suggested Mrs. Carroll. "Or maybe you have learned how to meet all the difficulties?"

Mr. Bradford laughed. "If I had, ma'am, I'd borrow a million and buy out the fruit company. There are years when profits are good, and others when the loss is bad. One year maybe a flood wrecks a bridge and I can't get the fruit to market in time. One season a drought almost ruined me. The year after a nice young plantation was blown into the middle of next week or rather next year by a high wind. It took a year to recover from that. Some years labor is hard to get, and it may not work after you do get it.

"There's an old saying about not putting all your eggs in one basket, that suits the banana trade. I have plantations in four different places, and there is very seldom any one trouble that hits all of them the same year, so that I am sure of a crop from one or another. The big companies, of course, do the same thing on a much bigger scale. No man with a small capital could expect to make his fortune in bananas here now. He might get his money's worth in experience but not in fruit. In the old days of sailing ships we never made anything on them. Bananas must have a quick steamer with cold storage quarters, and quick handling when they reach port."

"Do you think you will ever go back to the United States?" asked Mrs. Carroll. The old planter shook his head.

"I've been here too long for that. Now and then a man is made so that he likes the tropics — they get hold of him somehow. I was always wanting to get back here after I'd seen the place once. Now we'll go back to the house and I'll show you something we make from

An Indian Dwelling in Costa Rica.

bananas that you've never seen. My cook is a San Domingo woman, and she says they make it there."

It was a sweetmeat made of ripe bananas cut into thin slices, dusted with sugar and dried in the sun. The slices were turned repeatedly while drying, and each time dusted with fine sugar. Mr. Bradford also showed them banana flour made from unripe bananas ground and sifted after being well dried, and explained that an aluminum sieve must be used, or the flour would turn black. Fiber which can be woven into coarse cloth or made into hammocks is another product of the banana tree. Banana vinegar and sugar can also be made. A cousin

Pan American Union

A private railway on a banana plantation.

of the banana is the abacá from which Manila hemp is made.

Mr. Bradford had still another resource in case of the banana crop failing, for a part of his plantation was given over to cacao. Cacao can be grown on banana farms which have ceased to produce bananas, as well as on new land. Unlike bananas, this crop will keep for some time; and the Costa Rica cacao is of unusually fine quality.

"The good of being an American, son," the old planter observed, with a hand on Billy's shoulder, "is that you don't have to tie yourself to one thing. You never get over being interested in all sorts of things, so long as you stay on this interesting old planet. If both my crops failed I think I could make a living as a fisherman, and if the sea dried up I'd take a chance as a carpenter. But I know more about bananas than I do about any other one crop, and so long as the market is as good as it is now I expect to raise bananas."

Mr. Bradford and Billy had taken a liking to each other. On the way back to Limón, Billy had dreams of some day living in just such a charming old Spanish house with wide verandas and fountains, and shipping millions of bananas to countries in which the tempting fruit was now scarce and dear. He entirely overlooked the matter of the hot weather.

Elizabeth, for her part, was absorbed in a pretty Indian basket Mr. Bradford had given her, filled with fruit, and Mrs. Carroll was studying the curious stitch of a Panama grass-cloth bag which was her share of the gifts, and trying to make out how it was made. It had a very long plaited handle and served the native in place of a pocket or pouch. A part of the design was the

swastika, found on Central American monuments as it is found in Chinese and Egyptian and Norwegian art. How it reached the New World no one can tell.

"Mother," said Elizabeth, as they came back to their hotel in Limón, "I think this has been a lovely day."

Nevertheless, they were glad to leave the old seaport next morning and begin the long climb to San José.

So long as the train moved through the lowland near the coast the products were all tropical. Bananas, fruits of many sorts, cacao, and rubber grew there. Little huts appeared, each with its own piece of ground, the men lying about smoking or sleeping, the women, barefooted, doing a little gardening or cooking, and the children playing about in the very simplest clothing. In the market place of a Costa Rican town one may find five varieties of Indian corn, beans of several kinds, potatoes, cabbage, onions, and spinach, sold by market people, many of whom sit on the ground. They also sell vanilla beans, herbs, dyes, or anything for which there is a demand. Mr. Carroll told his wife that a Costa Rican dollar, worth about 45 cents in the money of the United States, would buy enough vegetables to feed the family a week.

"Do you suppose we could arrange it to live in our house at home and do our marketing in Costa Rica?" inquired she.

"Something like it, possibly," replied her husband. "All these rich uplands may some day be planted with strawberries and other fruits to supply the markets of the North as Southern California does. If the country ever becomes a great hotel district, there is a great opportunity here for enterprising truck farmers to supply the hotels."

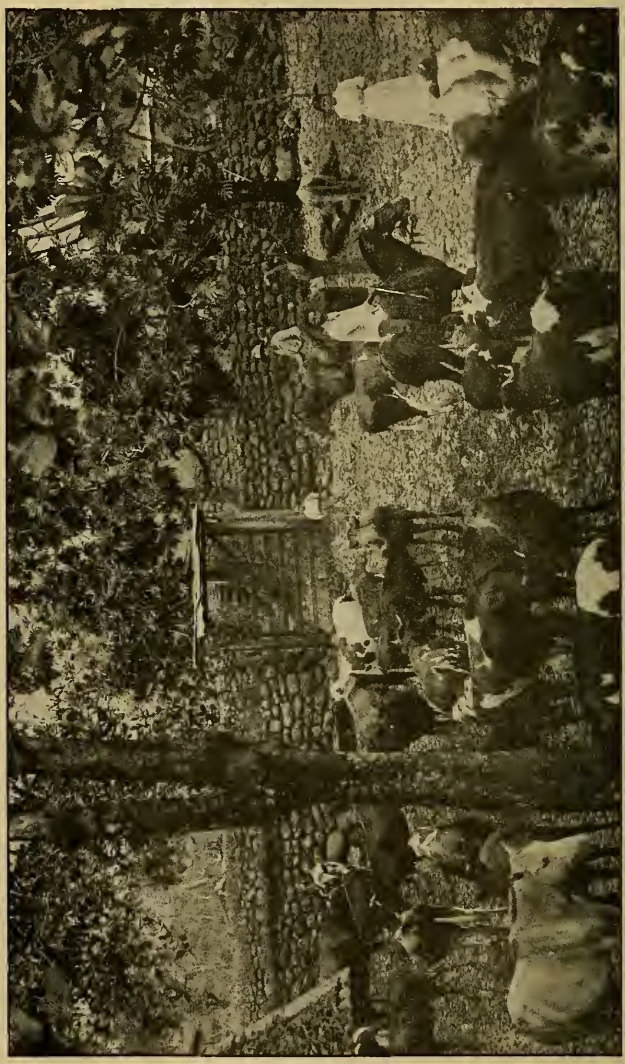
As their train began to climb out of the low country to a tableland, the Carrolls suddenly realized that they were passing from the tropical to the temperate zone. When a traveler starts at sea level near the equator and ascends a mountain one mile, he may experience the same drop in temperature that would be felt in going north a thousand miles. After ascending another mile he will find the air cooler in summer than in a part of North America 2500 miles north of the equator. Mrs. Carroll, according to instructions from her husband and Señor Bastido, had provided wraps for herself and the children, but in Limón it had seemed impossible that they could need them.

Now the change in temperature and even more the changes in trees, flowers, and birds before their very eyes as they looked out of the car windows, seemed like magic. No moving picture could have been so surprising and so fascinating.

Soon they were in country which looked like a woodland region of the United States, and familiar trees and flowers appeared. Orioles and other Northern birds appeared also, and Mrs. Carroll said she was sure that some of them recognized her and wondered if their human neighbors had taken to spending the winter in the South. No more bananas, rubber, or cacao could be seen. Mr. Carroll told them that this was a lumber, cattle, and mineral country and that gold and silver had been mined in the mountains, before Columbus came.

"Isn't there some there now?" asked Elizabeth.

"Probably; but it would take capital and machinery to get it out. The gold the Indians showed Columbus had probably been gathered a little at a time during centuries and made into ornaments handed down from



A ranch scene in the cattle region on the Atlantic coast of Costa Rica. *Pan American Union*

one generation to another. Besides, there could never have been any such rich gold mines here as he hoped to find. You notice all through the old chronicles that the Indians kept telling the Spaniards of wonderful gold mines that existed somewhere else — often in the country of one of their enemies. Indians have a strong sense of humor, and I suspect they sometimes played little jokes on the invaders."

CHAPTER EIGHT

Ups and Downs in Central America

"I never saw so many pretty girls together in my life as I have seen this morning," commented Mrs. Carroll the next day. Señor Bastido and Lucía had been showing their friends the sights of San José, and the whole party now sat listening to the military band in Morazán Park.

"They wear such pretty clothes and they seem so happy," added Elizabeth. "Mother, I like the way they dress here. They don't seem like just people walking around, they look like a party, with their slippers and bright shawls and everything."

"Picturesque is the word you are in search of, Betty," said her father. "Yes, the costume is picturesque — they call the gay shawl or rather scarf a *rebozo*, by the way — they've adapted the best points of both Indian and Spanish dress to their own style of living. The muslin gowns and satin slippers are Spanish, and the rebozo is worn in place of the lace mantilla that used to be the universal head-covering of Spanish ladies. I believe that hats have come into fashion lately to some extent."

"It is a pity," said Mrs. Carroll, "for nothing suits a Spanish girl's face like the mantilla, and no one else can wear it so well. I am so glad we have that photograph of you, Lucía, in your great-grandmother's black lace and tortoise-shell comb. I hope you will set the fashion here when you are a young lady."

Elizabeth dimpled and laughed. "It didn't suit me when I tried it on, did it, mother?"

"No; you looked like a little girl dressing up — as you were," laughed her mother. "But so does Lucía when she wears a gingham sunbonnet. I do like people best in their national costumes."

"There are all sorts here," put in Señor Bastido. "Some 10,000 of the people of Costa Rica are of Spanish descent, and as many more mixed Spanish and Indian. There is a large percentage of foreign-born residents — Italians, English, Germans, and people from your own country."

"We're foreigners here, ourselves," remarked Elizabeth thoughtfully, as they strolled back to their hotel. "That's funny. I don't feel foreign."

"Perhaps you would, if you saw people smiling and pointing out the difference between your ways and theirs as if you were ridiculous," her father observed. "I am very much pleased with you, Betty. You are enjoying Lucía's country just as she did ours. If you go on in that way, you'll be sure to have a good time."

"Nobody would notice anything about the clothes of some of these people if they went down Fifth Avenue in 'em," said Billy. "There's a man with spats on."

"I was talking with a clothing merchant last night at the hotel," said Mr. Carroll, "and he told me that the hardest fight he had when he came was to convince the manufacturers at home that the Costa Ricans knew anything about good style. He found as he became acquainted here that many Central Americans are quite at home in Paris, send their children to be educated in France, and look to the French designers for styles just as we do. He received a large consignment of spats by our boat, and he was congratulating himself on the fact that he had succeeded in getting what he wanted,

— quiet colors and styles. He says that people here who have money to dress well want clothing in subdued colors and good taste, and that it is the greatest possible mistake to count on 'unloading' on them conspicuous goods which they do not want."

Señor Bastido, who had stopped to speak with friends, now crossed the plaza and rejoined them, in front of the cathedral.

"These fig trees," he observed, "are as old as the oldest building here. They were planted by the Spaniards. I once ate some figs in the garden of the President of Peru, from a fig tree four hundred years old planted by Pizarro."

It seemed a long way from Pizarro the swineherd's boy and his wild career of plunder, to this brilliant plaza with its university and its million-dollar opera house. As the Carroll party went slowly on, enjoying every new and picturesque bit of street life, Billy suddenly discovered what made the city so strange.

"Everything is one story high," he said. "They wouldn't have much use here for an elevator man."

"Earthquakes, my son," answered his father. "Now and then one occurs, and the one-story house does not suffer as a tall building would. That great mountain over there, Irazu, in 1723 almost destroyed Cartago, the old capital, thirteen miles from here. In 1841 it broke out again and a stream of fiery lava poured down the side of the mountain. There may be another eruption some day, and there may not."

The Carroll children looked rather solemn. It seemed strange to be sauntering along so happily in the sunshine and know that that unseen fiery furnace was blazing away deep down in the heart of the volcano. Lucía

was quite undisturbed. She had heard of earthquakes ever since she could remember, and had been in more than one; and none of the people she knew ever thought of making themselves unhappy on that score.

At this point a brass band and a company of bell ringers could be heard coming down a side street. When they appeared, the students and school children on their way home stopped where they were and knelt down, all traffic halted, and the workmen busy on a half-built house stopped their work and knelt down, too. Señor Bastido and Mr. Carroll removed their hats, and Billy in some bewilderment hastily followed their example. Elizabeth and Mrs. Carroll were too much amazed to speak.

"It is a funeral," said Mr. Carroll, just loud enough for them to hear.

The priest and his assistants were robed in splendid vestments. Until the funeral had passed, no attention whatever was paid to anything else. Then life went on as before.

"There were notices of this funeral posted up in the streets, I remember, this morning," said Mr. Carroll. "I knew a man once who came here on important business and had the bad taste to look on at such a procession as if it were a show, even making some joking remark to the man whom he had come to see. He couldn't understand why he never got the favor he wanted from that man. He was a well-behaved enough fellow at home, but there must have been some lack of decent feeling in him to make him do as he did here. Of course, it is even more important to be courteous in a foreign country than in your own, because you are a sort of unofficial diplomat."

"It is fortunate for us that the rude ones do not always

see that," commented Señor Bastido, laughingly. "As it is, they give us the advantage of knowing them as they are and not as they wish us to believe they are."

"It is all the more pity," remarked Mrs. Carroll, "that those of us who really have no desire to be rude should be thoughtless enough to seem so. I am afraid that without you and Lucía to give me a word of explanation now and then the children and I should have got on much less easily. There are so many small customs that everybody takes for granted until they are questioned by some stranger — it's so everywhere."

"Father," said Billy, that afternoon, as they sat on the cool veranda waiting for the heat of the day to be over, "I've been reading in that book about the explorers in old times, and they were awfully careful, some of them, to find out what the Indians' customs were and make friends with them. Was it just because they thought they were part of a great empire?"

"Partly, no doubt," said Mr. Carroll, glancing over the account of the old voyages. "Columbus and many of those who came after him expected to find somewhere inland the empire of the Great Khan of Tartary of whom they had heard. Conquerors like Attila and Genghis Khan from the great plains of Asia, you know, had even invaded Europe. Perhaps Columbus had heard of Tamerlane the great descendant of Genghis Khan. He conquered most of Asia less than a hundred years before these voyages. Some of the customs of our Indians are rather like those of wild tribes of Asia, and the Indians here were just such red-brown or yellow-brown people, understanding gold-work and the weaving of cotton, and living partly by agriculture, as Columbus expected to see. Of course, if they became friendly with Spain, and were

subjects of a ruler like Tamerlane, it would mean a wonderful change in the history of Spain. She might rule the whole world. But Columbus was a trader, and he must also have been thinking of the chances for trade with such a people. It was worth his while to find out what they liked and how they lived, and what they would pay for in gold. Spain was a manufacturing country in those days. There was nothing like her steel weapons and leather-work."

"Pizarro wasn't a trader," remarked Billy. "Or was he?"

"No; I should call him a robber, and a low kind of one at that. When Pedrarias became governor of Panama and executed Balboa, Pizarro got a share of land, as one of the captains of Balboa's expedition, and some Indians to work it. But he had no idea of settling down to the slow job of a planter, and he hadn't forgotten what the Indians had said about the rich country to the south. Not having the money to fit out ships himself, he went to a priest, Father Luque, who owned the revenues of the island of Taboga. Father Luque agreed to raise the money, and Almagro, another soldier of fortune from the lowest ranks of society, agreed to fit out and take charge of the ships. Pizarro was to command the expedition, and Pedrarias allowed it to sail on condition that he got one fourth of the plunder.

"So you see, it was in a way a business expedition. Pizarro expected to loot the country and pay himself and his partners in that way. Most people thought Father Luque must be crazy; in fact, his nickname for some time after that was Padre Loco, the mad priest.

"There was an old story which crops up like a fairy tale all through Spanish American history of that time,

about a secret way for ships through the Isthmus. It was probably a pass over which large canoes could be carried. The Spaniards already considered themselves masters of the Pacific, and if they found such a channel and held it, you see what it would mean to their trade. The gold and pearls they had already found in the Isthmus had set them to imagining all sorts of marvelous things. Every adventurer dreamed of making his fortune. It really seemed as if Spain might practically own the world. But I don't believe the world was intended to be owned with so little trouble as that."

"When Lucía first came to live with us," observed Billy, "she had just learned English and she used to say, 'Not for the whole world!' when she promised she wouldn't do something. Mother heard her one day and she said, 'What would you do with the world, Lucía, if you had it?' Lucía thought a minute and then she said, 'Well, I wouldn't keep it. The world ought to be shared!'"

Mr. Carroll laughed. "That's not a bad motto. If the early conquistadores had been willing to share with t'other people, they might have left more to their descendants. The Spanish settlers who were kind and just to the Indians never had any reason to regret it."

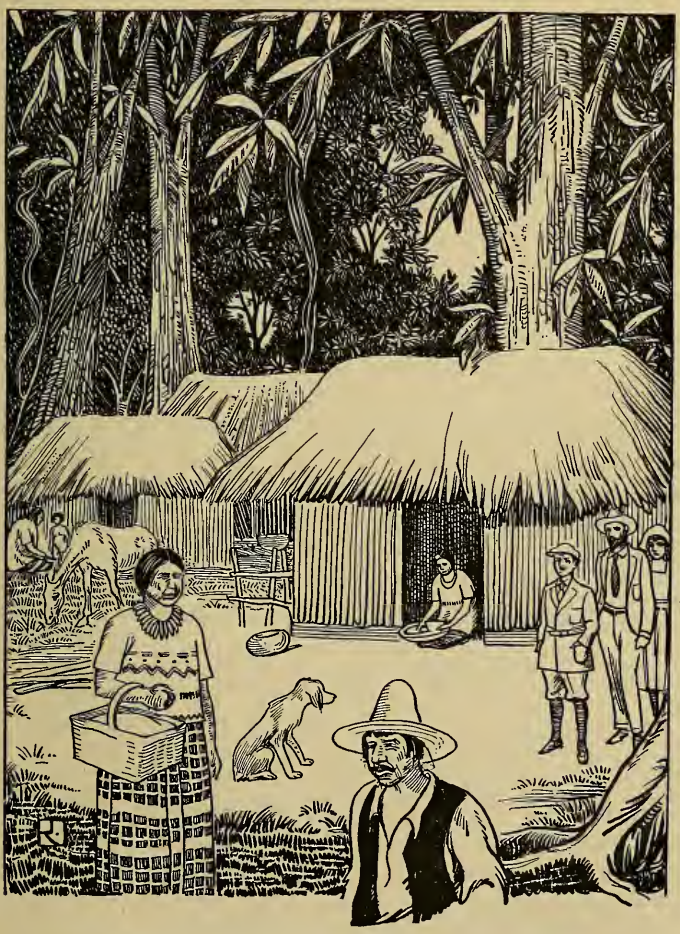
Señor Bastido came up, his broad, cool Panama in his hands. "Do I hear you speak of Indians? That is odd, because I came to ask if you would care to visit an Indian village tomorrow."

"Real Indians?" Billy asked excitedly.

"Real Indians, Talamancas, living just as their people did four hundred years ago."

"How do you get there?" asked Mr. Carroll.

"By railway and on mule-back. I know something



A group of Indian huts in the Costa Rican forest.

of the dialect, and our *mozos* (drivers) will be Indians, so that you can talk with the people if you like."

"I don't see anything to do but to accept your suggestion with many thanks," said Mr. Carroll, laughing at Billy's radiant face. "That is, if mother likes it, and I am sure she will."

Mrs. Carroll proved as enthusiastic as Billy, and Elizabeth, if anything, more so. Therefore early the next day the whole party set off for the Indian village.

"You have seen those of our people who attend the opera and visit Paris," said Señor Bastido. "Now you will see Costa Ricans who own nothing, build nothing, and live as they have always lived, on their own land."

The little group of huts in the forest looked like a village of birds' nests. Near by, on an open space of ground, the Indians raised their crops. Little wiry horses and thin cattle grazed about. The huts were thatched with grass, and the floors were of earth. Billy had rather expected wigwams, but now he remembered that he had read of these only among the Indians who moved about and lived by hunting over great areas of country. The Indians received them in a friendly way, but showed little excitement, and much conversation took place in English, Spanish, and Indian. The old chief knew a little Spanish, and by patient endeavor and a good deal of tact Mr. Carroll won him to talk of things in which Indians are really much concerned.

"You white people have your cities and plantations," the old man said, his keen black eyes watching their faces. "Why do you wish to take our land from us? You do not care to live here, and we Indians like the forest far better than your cities. Why should these

forests not be left for ourselves and our children, since you do not need them for yourselves?

"White people come to trade with us, but they do not trade fairly. They give us bad whisky to drink, and make us crazy, so that we have no sense. Then they take our bananas or chocolate or whatever we have to sell, and pay what they choose. My nephew found a gold nugget in a mountain stream. It was worth maybe fifty dollars. But when he had had a drink or two of bad whisky, he sold it for a dollar."

Lucía was translating the old man's speech to Mrs. Carroll and the children as fast as he made it, and when she came to this her eyes flashed.

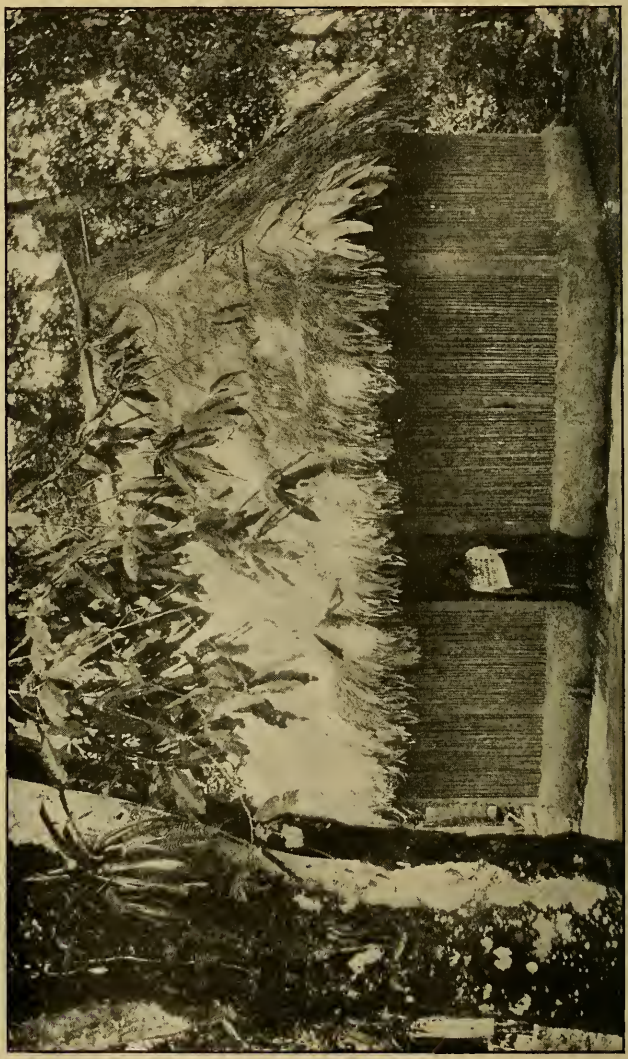
"I guess," said Billy, soberly, "that the early settlers didn't do all the cheating."

"Father told me once," said Lucía, "when I was a very little girl, that if an Indian finds that you deal fairly with him he will do the same with you; and he never forgets. One day father wanted some tagua nuts to show a gentleman who was visiting him, and he asked the mozo about them, and the mozo went I don't know how many miles to get him some."

"What are tagua nuts?" asked Mrs. Carroll.

"The tree is a kind of palm, but only about ten to twenty feet high, and grows in clusters, and the flowers smell very sweet. The nut has inside a number of hard white seeds as big as little potatoes. The Indians sell them sometimes to the German buyers, and they are made into vegetable ivory."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Carroll, "that must be what the handle of this umbrella is made of. I knew it could not be real ivory, although it looks so like it, and the clerk told me it was a vegetable substitute. I wonder who



The home of a Costa Rican Indian family.

gets the difference between what the Indians were paid and the value of the umbrella handles and buttons and chessmen made from the kernels?"

Señor Bastido had been talking with the old chief in the Indian language for several minutes. As the party took its departure he said: "I have found out something today that I never could get an Indian to tell me before. Perhaps you know that a dead Indian's bow and arrow and other property are always buried with him. I have heard explanations, of course, but not from the Indians themselves. There is no use in trying to trap an Indian into telling what he does not choose to tell. But while you were talking to him I wrote down what he had told me in my notebook. This is what he said, word for word:

"'You ask me why we bury a man's property with him and do not give it to his children. This is the reason. When an Indian dies, he will never come back to live in the forest. He does not need the things which were his. To give them to his son and his women would make them lazy, and the other Indians would be envious. In the woods and fields there is plenty for all. If those who are alive will work, they will have no need of the things of the dead. When they know that they must work, they work. The women marry and have children. When the parents are old, the children support them. This is better for all. We Indians believe that all should work and take from the ground what is fresh, day by day, year by year. Those who have not earned their living, and who will not work, have no right to share what others earn. We do not understand why white people think this is wrong. We think it is the right way for everybody.'"

"Did you make any attempt to meet his argument?" asked Mr. Carroll.

"No," said Señor Bastido, slipping his notebook into his pocket, "I did not. Civilization, to him, would probably mean sewing machines, patent leather shoes, ready-made clothing, factory life, and cold-storage food. I do not feel at all sure that he is not a wise leader for his people. If ever we can show him a civilization better than his own by his own standards, he will have some reason to change his views. But he will judge us always by his standards, not ours."

"The trail narrowed abruptly until the mules had to go in single file."

CHAPTER NINE

Mules and Mountain Trails

"I wish we didn't have to go back to San José tonight," said Elizabeth, regretfully. She had grown really fond of her shaggy little burro and wanted to see more of him.

"Did anybody tell you we did?" queried her father.

"B-but, Daddy, we aren't going to stay in that Indian village, are we?" Elizabeth was puzzled and rather dismayed as they stood waiting for the others to come up.

"No; but if you are really desirous of a little more of this wild life we may arrange to have it. Señor Bastido tells me that some people he knows have a cattle ranch here in the mountains somewhere, and that it will not take as long to reach it as it would to return to San José. But I thought I would see how you stood the journey before I said anything. Some of the cross-country riding here is rather rough."

Elizabeth's bright face was proof enough that she was pleased with the new plan, and Billy gave an irre-

pressible whoop of delight. Mrs. Carroll, when she heard it, was not quite so enthusiastic. She thought of meeting a family of strangers in her dusty traveling garb, and was relieved to find that an extra mule was in waiting at the station, loaded with the hand luggage of the family, and would be at the ranch as soon as they were.

"I wonder if automobiles will ever come here?" said Elizabeth, as they climbed the mountain trail under Señor Bastido's guidance. It was just wide enough for her to ride beside her father.

"Aëroplanes would seem more suited to the country," answered Mr. Carroll. "There are some automobile roads in Central America, however, and there will be more as time goes on. When I brought your mother here before, we traveled more or less by diligence."

"What's that?"

"A diligence is a sort of stagecoach used in France and Spain and Italy before the days of railroads and still in use to some extent. It is drawn by from four to seven horses or mules, — in Spanish countries mules are used as a general thing. It can go where an automobile could not, because it is lighter."

"It can't be very fast," said Billy.

"With a good team and driver I have traveled forty miles in six hours across hilly country," said his father. "The fare is from five to ten dollars for a day's trip of from thirty to fifty miles. At the end of the trip the driver is paid, and the next day he returns with his mules. But in this part of the trail to which we are coming I think any sort of wheeled carriage would be decidedly out of place."

Elizabeth thought so, too, for the trail narrowed

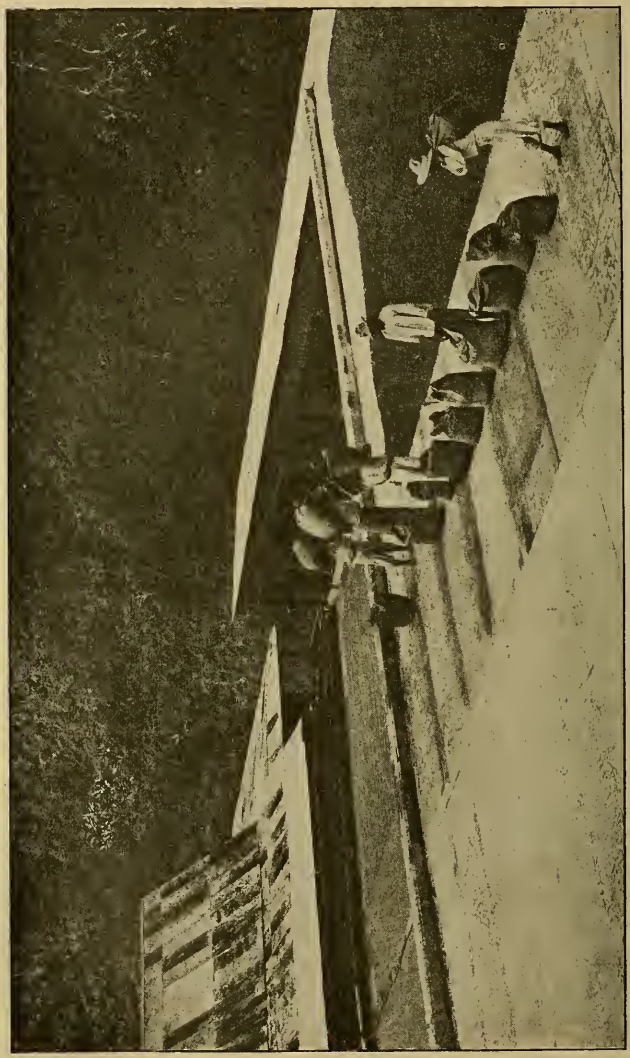
abruptly until the mules had to go in single file. Her father assured her that there was no danger if she sat still and let the wise little burro find his own way, and after a while she forgot to be nervous and began to enjoy the wild scenery about her. Billy was perfectly happy, and as for Lucía, she never thought of being frightened. She had learned to ride almost before she learned to walk.

"Did you ever go in more dangerous places than this, Daddy?" Elizabeth inquired when they had turned into a fairly wide road once more and were riding through broken hilly country half covered with forest.

Mr. Carroll smiled. "Not many into which I should care to take you, Betty. As it was, we made sure that these mules were good and steady when we arranged for them. A mule threw me over his head once, just after passing a ravine 1500 feet deep. If he had stumbled three minutes before he did I should never have met your mother."

"Could anybody camp out here, Dad?" Billy inquired.

"It is possible in some parts of Central America, but not always very comfortable," his father answered. "I haven't often done it, because I have been traveling on business. By taking an extra mule for every two persons, to carry tent, folding cots, blankets, and food supplies for emergencies, one may be independent of inns. One cot and the blankets are strapped to one side of the mule, the other cot and the cooking supplies to the other side, and all covered with the dark canvas that is used for the tent. It is always best to carry personal luggage in the pockets of one's own saddle. Then, if the pack mule runs away, it isn't so disastrous."



Drying coffee on a plantation in Costa Rica.

Mr. Carroll gave a funny look at his wife, and she laughed. "When your father and I were down here," she said, "that very thing happened. For twenty-four hours we had to get along with not even a tooth-brush or a comb, until the mule was caught."

It was nearly sunset, and the party had a glimpse of a quaint old Spanish-American house among trees and shrubs to the left. A moment later they were riding up the avenue to the door, and two Indian boys appeared, to take charge of the mules. As the party alighted, brushing off the dust as best they might, and moved toward the broad veranda of the residence, Lucía, who was a little in advance, turned and faced them and made a graceful courtesy.

"Welcome," she said with a pretty gesture. "My house is yours."

She spoke in Spanish, but that was a phrase they had all heard. Señor Bastido stood aside, smiling at the amazement on the faces of their guests.

"Lucía, you little witch, what do you mean? Is this your home? What sort of mystery have you been concealing from us all this time?" asked Mrs. Carroll, laughing both with relief and delight as she looked about at the charming surroundings, — the little fountain, the garden, the mountains and wooded slopes in the distance, and Lucía standing in the doorway, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

"Dear Aunt Isabel, do you like it? It was my little joke, you see, not to tell you before. I did not know of it myself until father came North this year. You see, my name-aunt Lucía left me some money years ago when I was very little, and father has been keeping it for me. There was also a ranch in the mountains here which she

owned, for my uncle was from Costa Rica, but no one thought it was worth anything until the new railroad came. Then father visited it and saw that the house was old, but could be made comfortable, and he had it put in order. When he asked me if I should like it for a Christmas gift I said I had rather have it than anything else in the world."

They all laughed, for they remembered the old phrase the little Lucía had used so often.

"Then I asked him not to say anything about it to you beforehand, but bring you here for a surprise. Is it really a nice surprise, Aunt Isabel?"

"My dearest child, it is the very sweetest surprise I ever had," exclaimed Mrs. Carroll, taking the little girl in her arms. "And now if Betty and I, not to mention the gentlemen, may be allowed to put ourselves in order —"

"Your rooms are all ready, and Manuela will wait on you," Lucía said as she led the way to delightfully cool and spacious apartments opening on a shady court. "It was so funny, Aunt Isabel, to see you wonder what people would think of your riding habit. We had everything packed and sent from the hotel this morning — you know you had hardly taken out anything yet — and now you shall do exactly as you please as long as you stay."

"It's too lovely to be true!" cried Elizabeth, and she hugged Lucía.

Next morning the children were awake early, and heard a queer sound which they could not associate with anything they could think of. When they had dressed and gone out to investigate, they met Lucía and found that what they had heard was the Indian cook making tortillas. These are flat cakes made of corn

and baked on a clay griddle. The corn is shelled and boiled in ashes until the skin can be easily removed. It is then washed many times, until all taste of the ashes is gone. Then the corn is ground in a stone mortar and kept moist by adding water, so that at last it is like dough. A small quantity is taken between the hands and patted into the shape of a griddle cake and baked. The Indian housewife makes a supply of these in the morning to serve as bread for the family.

The children also learned to like *frijoles* — black beans. They look decidedly unappetizing at first sight, but are really very good, especially when seasoned as Manuela seasoned them. They not only ate honey, but for the first time saw it made.

Making tortillas or corn cakes. The corn is in the large dish; the paste is made on the grinding stone; in the background can be seen the tortillas cooking on a flat stone.

"The bees are good for the coffee plantations," said Señor Bastido. "I expect to make this ranch a sort of out-of-door experiment station. When I came here I found very small native bees in Guanacaste, where the Indians used a hollow log for a hive, hung beside the house. These bees do not seem to thrive in higher altitudes, and I thought it best to bring in some Italian bees for our hives here. We are told that there are 3000 hives in Costa Rica, which produce about 150,000 pounds a year. Fifty pounds of honey isn't so bad an output for laborers who feed and pay themselves!"

"How do the bees help the coffee?" asked Billy, puzzled by this curious statement.

"That is a little hard to explain unless you know botany," said Señor Bastido. "In flying from blossom to blossom they brush off the pollen and carry it and brush it off again, so that all the blossoms get their share, as you might say. When this goes on everywhere within a mile or two of the hive, it is certain to distribute the pollen more thoroughly than the blowing of occasional winds. On cacao plantations it has been found that without the help of insects not more than one out of eighty flowers will bear fruit. You see, on a well-managed plantation the animals, plants, human beings, and even the insects help one another, so that all are better off. The more honey the bees make, the more coffee there will be; and the more coffee plantations come to flower, the more pasture there is for the bees."

"And when you have increased your crop to a tempting point," said Mr. Carroll, "swarms of insects come and dispose of it in one night."

"Then we shall look for some means to get the better of the grasshopper," said the Central American, calmly.

Primitive beehives in Costa Rica.

"There is also a kind of insect that sucks the blood from the cattle. These plagues do not come often, but when they do they arrive in large armies. Meanwhile we have at least what we produce in the years when they leave us in peace."

"Are there any snakes here?" asked Elizabeth.

"Not in any great numbers here; they are plentiful in the lowlands, and some are poisonous. Common snakes eat so many insects and mice and other pests that killing them off is sometimes rather short-sighted policy. Nature arranges affairs in such a way, especially in the tropics, that to destroy one species of live creature entirely may mean that some equally unpleasant pest on which it fed will increase tremendously. I would rather have a few harmless toads and snakes and a large colony of birds police my garden than do it myself with insect poison."

Billy found it interesting to hear one of the old herds-

men tell of finding gold in a stream. He never quite gave up the hope that he might find some himself.

"Father," he asked one day when they were scrambling up a mountain trail on shaggy little burros, "do you think there is any gold in these mountains now?"

"I suppose there is, more or less. It was somewhere about here that Veragua, the rich gold-mining country of which the Indians told Columbus, was supposed to be."

"Why don't people get it out, then?"

"Easier said than done, Billy. Gold is sometimes mixed up with rock, like fruit in a mince pie. It may have to go through an ore-crushing machine to get rid of the worthless stone. It may be mixed with other metals or minerals so that it has to be melted and separated by methods that chemists work out. These undertakings need a great deal of capital, and unless the mines are rich enough to make it pay to spend the money, no one will put in machinery and pay labor. The mine may be in a place hard to reach, where all supplies and machines must be brought over such a trail as this from the coast. Most of the gold found first was 'free gold' in nuggets and pebbles or fine grains washed down by mountain streams. It takes years to wash out such gold as this, and after a time of course all there was in sight had been picked up. Then as men began to dig for gold they found more in the soft dirt along the streams, and more still in rocks that could be split and pried apart with the rude tools they had. Gold-mining nowadays is mainly carried on in big mines where machinery is used, and there is not enough here, so far as we know, to make that worth while. Even the gold from the graves of the Indians has been carried off."

"Gold from the graves!" exclaimed Billy, incredulous.

"Didn't you hear how the old Indian told the reasons for burying their wealth with them? Gold ornaments, plates of gold, and other ornaments were buried in the graves of the Indians along this coast, and these mounds, called *guacas*, were opened by white men and the gold taken out."

"Well," said Billy, after thinking the matter over, "I don't believe I'd ever want gold badly enough to steal it from a graveyard."

"Some day there may be gold in these rivers in another form," said Mr. Carroll, as they started down the steep trail on the other side of the ridge. "There is an almost unlimited amount of unused water power here, either to use as water power or convert into electricity. One reason why the country has not been more quickly settled is that there are few large rivers, and so many rapids occur in the Central American rivers as a rule that boats cannot easily ascend them. In such a country transportation must be by boats plying along the coast or by mules traveling over such trails as this one. Look at the cross section of Central America in this little pocket-book that I have."

"Great place for a scenic railway," was Billy's comment. "Talk about looping the loop, this is it."

That evening, when they were all in the library where Señor Bastido had his books and maps, Billy asked to see the map showing altitudes in the various Central American republics.

"I believe," he said, after studying it earnestly for some time, "that this country would be bigger than the United States if it was ironed out."

"But perhaps not so interesting as it is now," suggested his mother.

"A Brazilian once said to me," remarked Mr. Carroll, "'Our greatest assets are our greatest liabilities.' He meant that everything that seems a serious disadvantage has some equally important advantage. He said that the wonderful inland plateaus which are found in so many of the Central and South American countries are among the finest lands on earth. They have remained undeveloped because they are hard to reach, and the very thing that makes them hard to reach, — that there is this abrupt change in altitude, — gives them their extraordinary variety of climate and products. There are surprises waiting for us all over this unique region when the transportation problem is worked out, but it will take time."

"Owing to our national politeness?" asked Señor Bastido, mischievously.

"I might say yes," laughed Mr. Carroll, "considering how the railroad was built to Punta Arenas."

"I should think a man who could build a railroad in Central America could build one anywhere," commented Billy, still occupied with the map.

"How did they build that one, Daddy?" asked Elizabeth, catching at the hint of a story.

"When it was begun you would naturally expect the builders to start from the Pacific end of the line. In that way they could carry rails and other material and supplies by cars running over the line as it was completed section by section. But there was a carrying trade already established between Punta Arenas and San José, and this would have been interfered with by that way of managing. Therefore, not to hurt the feelings of

their neighbors, what did they do but begin at the eastern end and work down toward the coast, all materials being carried up over the mountains! That is what might be called politeness at the expense of profit."

"Perhaps they saved time in the end," said Mrs. Carroll. "You know that old proverb about being penny wise and pound foolish. If there is anything I try especially to avoid, it is a quarrel with the next-door neighbor."

CHAPTER TEN

Along the Tropical Coast

On the way to Corinto, Nicaragua.

It was hot in Punta Arenas. During their stay at the ranch the Carrolls had almost forgotten that they were in the tropics. But on reaching the little Pacific seaport they had no doubt about it. The small steamer which they were to take came crawling up from Panama, and next morning the lighters came out to unload the freight. The Carrolls had no desire to stay in Punta Arenas, and were glad to take the first boat out to the steamer. They sat on the deck watching the unloading.

It was a very curious sight. The men rowing the lighters stood up, facing in the direction they were going. Presently a large lighter, towed by a small rowboat with six oars, put out from the shore. The men rowed until the line was taut, then stopped with a jerk. Then the men on the lighter pulled on the line and drew the two boats close together, while the rowers held their boat as still as possible. Then it was all done over again.

"This reminds me," said Mrs. Carroll, "of the frog in the well who crept up three inches and fell back three and three quarters. It seems as if the small boat were

being pulled toward the lighter instead of the lighter toward the small boat."

"They are getting the answer set down in the book, all the same," her husband observed. "Results are the thing."

Sure enough, the boat did in time cross the space between the steamer and the shore, and boxes and bales began to be dumped into the lighter from the hold of the steamer.

"I should like to know why they call a heavy boat like that a lighter?" said Billy, as he leaned over the rail watching the work.

"Possibly because it lightens the load of the ship," said his father. "Many words that sailors use are very old English. They sometimes say 'light along,' meaning to move a thing by lifting and carrying it."

"And people say 'light out' when they mean run away," added Lucía. "But that's slang, isn't it?"

"Yes," answered Mrs. Carroll, smiling. When Lucía was learning English, Mrs. Carroll had cautioned the children to explain to her any slang phrases she might hear, so that she would know slang from good English. In return Lucía had taught them all Spanish, not as they might have learned it from a book, but as it is spoken among educated Spanish-Americans. She was going with them on their travels through Central America while her father went direct to Guatemala, and the children were surprised to find how fast they were learning to understand, with Lucía's help, the Spanish they heard around them.

"Where are we going next, Daddy?" Elizabeth asked, as she saw her father take out his pocket map. He had traced their route on it with his fountain pen, and the line looked rather like a snarl of string.

"We are on our way now to Corinto in Nicaragua," answered Mr. Carroll. "A railroad runs from that port to Managua, the capital. After visiting Managua we come back to Corinto and go by steamer to Amapala, the port of Honduras. We cross the bay in a motor boat, which takes about six hours, and get up at five o'clock next morning to go by automobile to Tegucigalpa, the capital. That will take all day. We come back over the same road to Amapala and take the steamer again to La Libertad in Salvador. From that port we go by train to San Salvador, the capital. Then we return to La Libertad to take the steamer to San José in Guatemala and go by rail to Guatemala City."

"It would break a snake's back to follow our trail," said Billy.

"As my grandmother used to say, when you can't do as you want to, you have to do as you can," said Mr. Carroll, dryly. "If you are well prepared to do as you want to you'll very often find that you can, but in this case the shape of the country is too much for us."

And when Billy came to study the nature of the land on the altitude map, he admitted that it was not very favorable to cross-country travel in anything like a straight line.

Just before the steamer left Punta Arenas a party of their own countrymen came on board, and, as the Carrolls could not possibly help knowing from the loud talk that went on, the stout old gentleman who was the principal person in the group was named Follansbee. There were two children about the age of the Carrolls, named Imogene and Clifton B. The young men and the girls called one another by their given names, which proved to be respectively Roscoe, Jack, Paula, and Helen.

There were two older ladies, and a younger one who seemed to be the mother of the two children but who made no effort to keep them from scampering over the ship and doing exactly as they happened to choose.

Two families of well-to-do Latin-Americans were on board also, and seemed to regard the Follansbee party as a kind of circus. They were too polite to show their amusement openly, but they had clearly never seen anything in the least like this before.

The Carroll children were very much on their good behavior as they looked and listened. They had been talking in Spanish with their mother and Lucía for practice, for they had agreed that they would do this for an hour at some time every day, not speaking a word of English. Presently Elizabeth heard one of the girls say:

Pan American Union

Unloading freight at a Honduras seaport.

"They don't look like natives, but I suppose they are, or they would talk English."

Elizabeth, being nearest to the Follansbee group, was the only one who heard this, and she suddenly found herself growing rather warm. The way in which the girl said "natives" sounded as if she regarded them as inferior beings. She saw, all in a flash, how it must seem to a foreigner in the United States, to be regarded as a specimen of queer outlandish animal. Just then Mr. Carroll came along.

"Billy," he said in a low but clear voice, "I've just been watching the last of the freight coming on. Do you see that boiler? It's a good illustration of the way some of our capitalists go after the trade here."

There was a sudden silence in the Follansbee party, and the old gentleman looked up as if he were interested. Mr. Carroll, who had not noticed them, went on, handing his field-glass to Billy:

"On these coast lines there may be a wharf and there may not. You see how the freight had to be landed here. There is a wharf at Corinto, but this lot of freight isn't going there. Suppose it had to land in a heavy sea with the ship lying in an open roadstead. See how low the boat lies in the water. They'd run the risk of the boiler smashing straight through if they undertook to land it in some of these coast towns in a small boat."

Billy grinned as he handed back the glasses. On one of the packing cases was the name "Follansbee."

"Father," he said a little later, as they sat down to play chess on the other side of the deck, "did you know that that freight belongs to somebody on this boat?"

"No, son," his father answered, as they arranged the pieces on a pocket chessboard. "I didn't. All the

better if he is within sight when it comes to grief. It will, somehow or other."

"It's that man over there — Mr. Follansbee," said Billy, with a grin. "You ought to have seen his face when he heard what you said!"

Mr. Carroll gave his son one astonished look and laughed. "Well," he remarked, "I am ready to stand by it."

That afternoon Mr. Follansbee and the two young men came over to Mr. Carroll and drifted into a conversation. Billy, half asleep in the hot, dreamy tropical air, curled up in his mother's deck chair, listened with growing interest.

"The captain tells me," said Mr. Follansbee, "that you are familiar with this coast. I'd like to ask you a question or two."

"Anything I can tell you I will most gladly," said Mr. Carroll.

"I came down here this year to see for myself what we might be able to do with Central American trade. What chance do you think there is?"

"You can do more with Central American trade in less time than with most other fields," said Mr. Carroll, "if you understand it. On the other hand, you can put more hard work on it with less effect than on anything else I know. This is a new field."

"Well," said Mr. Follansbee, "I am in the agricultural machinery business mainly. We've done some foreign selling and I don't see any reason for not working off surplus stock here, near home.

"I have a consignment on board this steamer, and I'd like to know what's wrong with it. My son down here gave me to understand that we ought not to use heavy

packing-boxes, but his letter came after this lot started. Agricultural machinery needs heavy cases. We packed this just as we've packed thousands of cases for mountain country before. I can see, of course, now I've watched them load their freight, that the big cases might be risky, but what are you going to use instead?"

"Did your customer ask for strong wooden boxes?" inquired Mr. Carroll.

"How about it, Roscoe? You attended to that order."

"No," admitted the young man, a little sheepishly, "he didn't. He wanted waterproof canvas reënforced with half-inch boards and bound with wire. I sent you the order by telegraph and made it as short as I could."

Evidently money spent in telegraphing was extravagance in the eyes of Mr. Follansbee. The other young man took up the story.

"Besides that," he said, "the head of our shipping department said it would be safer to put the whole thing in a good box. I asked him about the canvas and board and wire plan and he said the men wouldn't know how to pack it that way."

"When you pay duty," said Mr. Carroll, coolly, "you will pay according to weight, your boxes paying the same duty as your machinery."

Mr. Follansbee shut his mouth grimly.

"Then that means," he said after a pause, "that we shall have to pay that duty; the customer won't. But do you mean to say that freight of that kind will go done up in boards and canvas?"

"It does," answered Mr. Carroll, "or the order would not have been given in that way. Probably your cus-

tomer knew where he could sell, or use, the boards and canvas. He may be in a region far from stores or mills, where these things are scarce. The waterproof cover was to protect it against rain. The wire keeps the contents from being tampered with on the way. Most freight going inland is carried sooner or later on mules. A mule will carry only a certain weight, and if your machinery doesn't arrive in parcels that he can carry, the chances are that it will never get there, that's all."

Mr. Follansbee took a block of cable forms from his pocket and began writing on one. Then he handed the slip to Mr. Carroll. "That all right?" he inquired.

The message was addressed to the head of the shipping department in the Follansbee Agricultural Machinery factory. It read as follows:

"Hold all goods intended for shipment Central America. Wait letter. E. H. F."

Mr. Carroll nodded. "That will save you trouble," he said.

"I know a carpenter," said Mr. Follansbee, "who has worked on jobs down here, and knows the country. He was sent me by a young fellow named Frost who said he could do anything short of building Noah's Ark. I'll set him to work in that shipping room."

"Is anybody else sending goods the way you say they ought to be sent?" asked Roscoe. "In our line, I mean?"

"I don't know about that especial line," said Mr. Carroll, "but the more you know about transportation and conditions here the less money you will lose. Business today is a great game, where every bit of special information counts. The Germans and the Japanese, living where wood is scarce and costly, will use burlap,

Indian *cargadores* or pack carriers.

canvas, wire, slats, or whatever saves weight and cost. We Americans, having cheap wood and high-priced labor, have formed the habit of using heavy packing-cases. Moreover, our goods travel over railroads, where they get very rough handling. They must have strong cases to stand it. Now we are sending our products to markets where every ounce in weight cuts profits, and every breakage may mean the loss of a customer.

"In some countries the packing of goods is a profession. With us it is not even a trade. It is an odd job. I believe we can do the job as well as any one if we set about it, and we are much nearer the Central American market. We may find that our wasted by-products will supply packing material. But it is not a matter to neglect, and we can't trust to luck when it comes to building up an export business."

"Well, sir," said old Mr. Follansbee, "I never met a man yet that I couldn't learn something from, and there certainly is more to learn here than I supposed. Is there anything else you think of that is important in our line?"

"One other point," said Mr. Carroll, quietly. "You spoke of unloading your surplus. If you will pardon the suggestion, that is not the view to take of this field. It has been too often taken. Salesmen from our factories have gone through these Central American countries when there was a time of over-production, getting orders and working up a trade, and then, when the customers wanted more goods, the factory would be too busy to fill the order. Sometimes the letter of the customer even remains unanswered. Let one of your men learn Spanish and make friends here, then let your home office give him proper support, and you will hold every customer year after year. If you haven't a man whose recommendations you can trust, don't send anybody. Exporters tell me that as a rule the best of the traveling salesmen are natives of the country. The two important points are to have your man here on the ground know the place and the people, and have your men in the home office careful to follow his instructions absolutely."

"My representative here," said Mr. Follansbee, "is my son Joe. He seemed to be rather discouraged when I met him here, and had a good deal to say about the difficulties. But I begin to see that he was right about some things."

"Evidently," said Mr. Carroll, after the old gentleman and his nephews had gone, "our steamer talks with that young salesman made an impression. If he's like his father, however, he can learn."

"I hope the girls can," said Mrs. Carroll. "I tried to caution Mrs. Follansbee that girls cannot go about in these countries with the freedom they have at home, but she seemed to think that American girls could take care of themselves anywhere."

"They may, and they may also be talked about everywhere," remarked her husband, grimly. "Latin-Americans use the phrase 'American girl' sometimes in a very unpleasant way. In some places it means simply a bold, ill-mannered, conspicuous young woman."

Elizabeth felt that she would "want to go through the floor if Daddy ever looked at her as he looked at those girls." Presently she said soberly, "You ought to have heard how Imogene answers her mother back!"

"That's unfortunate too," said Mrs. Carroll. "The Spanish people have never lost their deference for age and dignity. They show it in all sorts of small ways. Do you know, children, that in a Spanish house the sofa is always the seat of dignity? You aren't supposed to sit on it unless you are invited, and if you are, it is a mark of special honor."

"Lucía," said Elizabeth, suddenly, "was that why you never sat on the sofa when you first came to our house? We thought you didn't like it."

"It took me a long time to feel used to seeing people sit on the couch without an invitation," said Lucía, laughing. "And after all, it's only a little thing."

"The feeling that rules such customs is not a little matter," said Mr. Carroll. "In every country there is something that the people won't forgive. In these countries they don't forgive rudeness."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Ancient Land of Nicaragua

The papaya, a popular Central American fruit.

The steamer anchored outside the harbor of Corinto about ten o'clock at night. The harbor is large, but its entrance is narrow. The ship channel is still narrower and cannot safely be attempted except by daylight. Before six o'clock in the morning the men were busily unloading freight — barbed wire, cotton waste, kerosene oil, and boxes and bales of other supplies. Old Mr. Follansbee said that it was worth getting up before daylight to see the way the various consignments were packed.

"They must keep lots of chickens here," remarked Elizabeth, as a great cackling and squawking sounded from below.

"There are a good many gamecocks," answered her father. "One of the favorite amusements in these towns is cock-fighting, and every Sunday the laborers gamble away their wages in this way. They don't lose a great deal in money, for they haven't much to lose, but many of them lose much more than they can afford. I suspect, however, that that noise we hear is

made by parrots, parrakeets, and macaws. Hundreds of them are shipped from this port."

From the ship, Corinto looked like another Punta Arenas. The town is on an island five or six miles long, and a railroad bridge connects this island with the mainland. Coconut palms, beautiful and stately, give a tropical look to the buildings strung along the shore — warehouses, a hotel, shops, a church, and houses built in the usual Spanish style.

"Mother," said Elizabeth presently, when they were in the train and once more climbing upward from the low coast town, "is Managua a very old city?"

"Not very," answered her mother. "It is extremely modern in some ways. I remember how surprised I was at the excellent water supply and the electric light and telephones, for it happened to be the first Central American city I had seen. It is on the shore of Lake Managua, and really a beautiful place, though it is not large — about the size of our home town, shouldn't you say, Robert?"

"Not quite 50,000 inhabitants," answered Mr. Carroll, "according to this guidebook. In 1876 they had only 7000 — all the rest has grown up since."

Elizabeth looked decidedly disappointed. "I was wishing it was old," she explained. "I'd like to see an old Spanish city just as it used to be, with the old buildings all there. If they were so well built that it needed dynamite to tear them down, I don't see why they couldn't let them stay and use them."

"Do you think you would like to live in a house with no water supply except a fountain in the court, no light but candles, and no way to get about except by riding a mule or horse?" her father asked with amusement.

"I wouldn't care," Elizabeth persisted. "I'd make

believe I was going on adventures — like looking for the Fountain of Youth or something."

"You will hardly need to look for that for some time," laughed her mother. "But Betty dear, we are going to other places besides Managua. We go first to León."

Elizabeth's eyes began to sparkle. "Was that where Ponce de León came from?"

"No; it was the city that he and his friends founded in 1523. Nicaragua is almost a hundred years older than either New York or Boston."

Elizabeth gave a happy sigh. "I'm so glad. I do like old-time things. Does it really look old, mother?"

"That I can't tell you, Betty, for we didn't go there. I believe Lucía has never been there either, have you, Lucía?"

It turned out that none of the party had. Señor Bastido knew the region thoroughly, but he was not here to play guide, and they had to hunt out the strange, dramatic history from a newspaper clipping in Mr. Carroll's pocket-book.

Before they had finished the reading they were thrilled by the sight of the actual volcano which figured in the history, the great cone-shaped mountain Momotombo. At the foot of this mountain the colony was founded and named after the explorer's province in Spain. Here the people lived in prosperity and peace until the bishop was killed by a reckless son of the governor of the colony. The priests told the people that some terrible punishment would follow this crime, and not long afterward the prophecy seemed to be fulfilled. One bright, beautiful morning the men and women went about their work as usual, but in the middle of the day they saw with terror that the skies were suddenly growing as dark as night.

Pan American Union

A street scene in León, Nicaragua.

Within half an hour ashes were falling, and before the day was over an eruption from the volcano had destroyed a part of the city. Then the wind changed and blew the ashes out to sea, the darkness passed, the sun shone again, and the mountain was as quiet as before.

There was no peace in the city, nevertheless, for the people could not be sure that another and more violent outbreak might not follow. Finally they all — men, women, and children — left the city in a great procession of many thousands, the governor and the bishop leading them, and traveled twenty miles to the site of the present city of León.

Lucía remembered her father telling her about his visit to the ruins of the ancient city at the foot of Momotombo and to the very old Indian village of Subtiaba near the present León.

"I don't see why they built their city so close to the volcano, father," said Billy.

"Ponce de León may not have known it was a volcano when he explored the country, or he may have thought it was extinct," Mr. Carroll replied. "The soil around a volcano is usually very rich and good, and it also is likely to contain minerals useful in making gunpowder. That may have been a point to consider. Cortés once ran out of gunpowder, somewhere in Mexico, and sent his men up a volcano for the ingredients and made some then and there."

Cameras came into use at once when they reached León and went forth to explore the wonderful old city. They had so many temptations to photograph buildings, street scenes, and members of their own party in attractive settings, that Mr. Carroll had to go back to the hotel for more films.

First they climbed to the roof of the cathedral, which is more than 150 years old and covers a whole block fronting on the plaza or public square in the middle of the town. It seemed to command a view of all Nicaragua. On one side the blue Pacific, on the other the volcanoes of the Marabios, and all about them, coffee plantations, fields, and wild forest, — the scene was not like anything that the Carrolls had ever beheld outside this ancient land.

When at last they came down into the plaza and strolled about, seeing all that was to be seen, it was like a gorgeous pageant. The market alone was a fascinating sight. Almost every known fruit and vegetable was to be seen there, most of the produce brought in by barefooted, gayly clad Indians. There were piles of watermelons, cantaloupes, pineapples, oranges, bananas, pomegranates, beans, corn, potatoes, peppers, onions, and many other things unknown to the Northern market, and all for an absurdly small price. Sugar cane, cacao, and tobacco

are staple crops in Nicaragua; vanilla grows freely; and senna is a native herb.

The Carroll children had never seen fresh pomegranates, and bought some from an Indian girl.

"I advise you to eat your first pomegranate in strict privacy," said their mother. "It is rather a messy proceeding."

"It's good, all the same," said Lucía, and they found that both statements were true. Billy said that if he were to raise the fruit he should get somebody to invent a seedless one. The red pulp is packed full of tiny seeds, from which it gets its name, meaning "seed apple."

At last they found a nook out of the way of the crowd and watched the people go to and fro, laughing, chattering, buying and selling, exchanging bits of gossip in Spanish or Indian dialect. Here an Indian girl passed, straight as a pine sapling, a jar of water on her head. There came two Spanish señoritas in white muslin, dainty slippers, and bright scarfs, the prettier of the two wearing about her neck a little gold chain and carrying a rosary. Many of the people they saw had just enough Indian blood to give the complexion a slight shading of reddish brown like the hue of some beautiful tropical fruit. Unmixed Spanish families tend to fair complexions and very tiny hands and feet. The beautiful eyes and white teeth, abundant black hair, and slender, lightly moving figures of Nicaraguan girls add much to the witchery of such an old town as this.

"Has your old Spanish town been all that you expected, Betty?" asked Mrs. Carroll, when at last they had gone back to the hotel. Elizabeth's glowing eyes and enthusiastic "Oh, yes!" expressed the feeling of the whole party. They were in love with León.

"An Indian girl passed, straight as a pine sapling."

"I wouldn't mind if they'd built the canal here instead of at Panama," was Billy's comment.

"How could they?" asked Elizabeth. "It's ever so much wider than the Isthmus."

"Some of the arguments for it were not engineering arguments," answered Mr. Carroll, beginning to serve the chicken with rice and peppers, which they were having for dinner. "I remember that there was a great deal of talk about the Nicaraguan route in 1892. Climate was one point in its favor. Until our sanitary engineers solved the problem, the unhealthfulness of the Panama region was a great difficulty.

"Then there are the two great lakes of Nicaragua and Managua, which would have been of some assistance. And finally there were wealthy men of Central America who were willing to help such an enterprise. By the treaty between Nicaragua and the United States our Government controls the right to build a canal by this route, if we ever want to do it."

"I wish we could see people making sugar, Daddy," suggested Elizabeth, presently.

"Not much is made here," said Mr. Carroll. "The cane is used mainly for aguardiente."

"What's that?"

"Use your Spanish. Translate."

"Agua-ardiente — oh, I see. Burning water — fire-water."

"It is an inferior kind of rum. All sorts of juices are used to make liquors of one sort or another. In the old times rum was one of the chief exports of the West Indies or any other place where there were sugar plantations."

The next day they went to the original city of León

and found that the vanished people seemed very real. Their descendants, Spanish and Indian, were still living in this very region, and in parts Nicaragua is almost as wild as when the conquistadores came.

"Who else came here besides Columbus and Ponce de León?" asked Billy, on the way home. "Who discovered Nicaragua?"

"It's a little hard to say," answered Mr. Carroll. "Columbus of course was first to see the coast, but one of the early explorers hereabouts was a rather interesting adventurer named Gil González Dávila. He came to the New World in search of a way to the Moluccas, with an order from the King of Spain for some ships which Balboa had built. The governor objected to this, out of jealousy, and finally gave him four miserable ones which gave out before he had gone far. He and his men had to beach three of them, send the fourth for help,

A street vender selling the jocote.

and proceed on foot by land. In one place they were entertained by a chief in his house, and the rains were so severe that during the fortnight they spent there the posts of the house sank into the soft earth. The Spaniards cut their way through the roof and lived in the tree-tops.

"Finally they came to a gulf on the coast of what is now Costa Rica; and here a friendly chief, Nicoya, told them of a great chief inland named Nicaragua. They went to look for him and found him fifty leagues to the north. Nicaragua received them in a friendly way and began to ask them questions. He asked them if they came from heaven, and they said they did. He asked them how they came, — directly down like the flight of an arrow, or riding a cloud or in a circuit like a bent bow. I don't know what they said to that. Among other questions he asked how large the stars were and who held them in place and moved them about; where did the soul go when it left the body; did the King of Spain ever die; and why did the Spaniards love gold.

"Gil González was the first to come into the territory about Lake Nicaragua. He rode his horse into the lake, on the border of which the chief's capital was, and found the water to be fresh. He called it *Mar Dulce*, — the fresh-water sea. He came back to Panama in June, 1523, with 110,000 pesos of gold, and he is one of the early Spaniards who doesn't appear to have abused the Indians at all."

"I'm glad he didn't," said Elizabeth, contentedly.

"Are there gold mines here now?" asked Billy.

"Nearly five hundred, and mining experts say the country has hardly been scratched. A number of those near the west coast are in the hands of English capitalists. Gold mining has gone on from the time of discovery to

the present day. But most of the trade of Nicaragua is with the United States. Her cattle country is developing — do you remember all that barbed wire we saw landing? The west coast has so little timber that they use wire here as they do in our Western states. They use a good many other things that we turn out by machinery in large quantities, such as locks and nails and screws. That is where our gold mine is, my son, so far as Nicaragua is concerned, — not in digging gold from the ground but in making the most of the country in every way. If they get the wealth out of their country and pay us for what they want, it means wealth for us, — do you see?"

Mr. Carroll laughed as he turned a leaf in his notebook. "I talked with a firm that trades more or less with Nicaragua, and saw their record of sales. The biggest sales for the last week were in barbed wire, nails, soda straws, and bird cages. You see, all those things are turned out by large organized forces of workmen in our factories. In Nicaragua the labor is largely hand labor and not organized. They have a school for training telephone and telegraph operators, they make some furniture, boots and shoes, candles, cigars, and soap, but they send to us for nails and soda straws! Like most Central American countries it's a land of surprises. And I tell you, son, there's nothing more unexpected or full of curious meanings than an exporter's card catalog, if you can only see it. If boys who work in such places had the imagination to see where their goods go, why the directions are as they are, what need is met by a bolt of drilling for Indians' overalls, they'd enjoy their work a great deal more than they do."

"They were soon in a lovely hilly country."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Four Hundred Years of Progress

"Managua has changed almost as much as one of our 'boom towns' in the last few years," observed Mrs. Carroll. "How many improvements they have made since we were here!"

The Nicaraguan capital was in fact very up-to-date in some respects. The canned fruits and vegetables, ginghams and prints, enamel ware and toilet preparations which appeared in the shop windows were a curious contrast to the Spanish-looking houses and Indian working-people.

"There is one difference between this and one of our Western towns, though," said Mr. Carroll, after examining one of these displays rather closely. "The things they sell which are not made in Nicaragua — and most

of these goods are not — come from all over the world. I had a talk with the manager of this dry-goods store last year. He told me that jute bags for coffee and sugar came from Scotland and India, chemicals and dyes from France, rice from Siam and China, and bleached cotton goods, drilling, print, and gingham from England. But I see he has a lot of American dress goods this year."

"Don't they get anything else from the United States?" asked Billy, concerned for the honor of his country.

"Oh, yes. Most of their imported foodstuffs come from us, and they also get cement, canned butter, milk, explosives, boots and shoes, and paper, and machinery for sugar and mining industries. Curious mixture, isn't it?"

"I should like to know why Nicaragua is importing canned butter and milk, with all this cattle country," Mrs. Carroll remarked. "And do you mean to say they can't raise their own vegetables and meat, with such a climate as this?"

"They can, and do," answered her husband. "But there is a large section of Nicaragua that you haven't seen — forest and ranch and mining country not yet cultivated by farmers. If you were obliged to keep house there for a lot of hungry men who were used to a varied diet, you might be glad to buy canned food. Moreover, in many cattle districts in Spanish America the cattle are raised simply for beef, tallow, hides, and horn, and no attempt is made to do anything with the milk. The *vaqueros* or cowboys won't milk cows as a rule. That is true on some of our own ranches. Hence you find the curious spectacle of communities making a living off herds of cattle and eating canned butter and condensed milk, or doing without dairy products altogether."

"Doing without butter!" exclaimed Elizabeth.

"Yes, my daughter, and doing very well without it. To at least half the world butter is an unknown luxury so far as the poorer people are concerned. Olive oil, fats, and oily nuts take its place. I don't suppose the Spanish settlers of this country or their Indian servants ever thought of serving butter as we do, to eat on bread. You will find, when you come to live in a country like France or Italy, where they serve vegetables cooked in oil and meat stews rich in fat, that the fresh bread they give you is very good just as it is. That's the usefulness of traveling. You learn new ways of living."

Elizabeth looked rather incredulous, but she found in course of time that her father was right. Mrs. Carroll knew how to cook scientifically, and she already had bills of fare made out in which butter played a very small part indeed.

"Mother," she said a little later, as they were making ready for a drive into the country, "shall we have to eat dry bread while we live here?"

Her mother laughed. "Are you still worrying over that, Betty? Why, what do you think butter is?"

"It's made of cream," said Elizabeth, doubtfully.

"And cream is the oil or fat from milk. When we make butter we get rid of all the water in the cream and have a cake of pure fat or grease which does not spoil as milk does, or freeze. Nature doesn't care what sort of oil we use, but in order to be healthy we must have some sort, and not too much. Don't you remember how good the butterless rolls and chocolate were at that little French place where we had luncheon?"

"Where's the oil in that?" queried Billy.

"Chocolate or cacao is rich in vegetable oil, just as

olives and nuts are. Spanish cooks use all of these. In a hot climate it's easier to use ripe olives than to care for a dairy. Chocolate is even better, for it keeps in any climate."

"It's funny, but I never thought where chocolate comes from," remarked Billy. "I don't know whether it grows on a tree or a plant or a vine."

"Maybe you dig it up, like peanuts," suggested Elizabeth. "No, — don't you remember the Indians had cacao beans for trading with Columbus? It's a bean."

"You will have a chance to see," commented her mother, "for father says we are going to a cacao plantation. It must be time we were starting."

And just then Lucía entered with the information that the horses were ready and Mr. Carroll wished them to hurry.

It was a beautiful breezy day, just cool enough and not too cool, and they were soon in a lovely hilly country where trees, shrubs, pasture lands, and river valleys with mountains in the background made the ride one of the most unexpected fascinations. The landscape seemed in many ways as wild as the Rocky Mountains, and yet they passed villages which looked very old.

"Nicaragua has the most curious mixture of civilizations, I think, of any country I was ever in," said Mrs. Carroll. "I suppose when Gil González visited his Indian chief by the lake over yonder, the place didn't look very different from the way it looks now."

"And cacao was one of the first things the Spaniards took to Europe, four hundred years ago, when it was growing on this very plantation," said Mr. Carroll, thoughtfully. "More than that, we may see the descendants of Nicaragua's tribe working among the other Indians

and Spaniards under a French superintendent. Most of the product of this plantation goes to a chocolate factory in France. That was the country which invented chocolate creams, Betty."

"It did!" said Elizabeth. "And the Indians in Nicaragua make the chocolate!"

"In these days," said her father, "there's a great deal of geography to be learned from our dinner tables."

A few minutes later they turned toward a group of buildings in the middle of a large tract of land covered with low woods and shrubs. The children saw nothing which looked like beans, either on trees or vines. The trees were of two kinds, one tall, branching high, and standing about thirty-five feet apart, the other about twenty feet high at most. No grass or undergrowth was allowed under them, and here and there men were at work with machetes cutting and pruning, or with very primitive-looking hoes.

The manager, M. Durand, was very courteous and spoke English perfectly, and was glad to show them all there was to see. The first thing that they saw was a basket of curious ribbed pods of a reddish color, not like anything that grows in northern countries. M. Durand told them that this was the fruit of the cacao.

"What do they mean by the cacao bean?" asked Billy, rather bewildered. M. Durand split one of the pods and showed them dozens of bean-shaped kernels within.

"When the bean is hulled, roasted, and ground," he explained, "we have chocolate. When the seeds are ground without being shelled, we have the cocoa you drink at breakfast. Sometimes the hulls, ground separately, are sold under the name of shells, and made into

The cacao bean before it is treated to make chocolate or the ordinary cocoa.

a drink. We flavor the chocolate with a little vanilla and sometimes sweeten it."

"What does it grow on?" asked Billy, as they went out into the plantations. "There are two kinds of trees."

"Cacao trees must be shaded during the first three

years or they will not grow well, perhaps not at all," said M. Durand. "Some banana planters use their old plantations for cacao on this account. The banana makes an ideal shade for the first two years. But we do not use it here, partly because we are too high among the hills for bananas to grow well, and partly because the banana is apt to interfere with the young cacao tree in its third year. These trees, the juaquiniquil, branch so high that there is plenty of space between their branches and the top of the cacao, and they are quick growing. The important point in shade trees for cacao is to have the shade just thick enough, and if it is too thick we prune it. There are two other excellent qualities in this tree which you may not be able to guess."

The Carrolls looked the tree over from top to bottom, but this time even Lucía was nonplussed, although she had seen cacao plantations before.

"You will see," said M. Durand, with a little smile at their mystified looks, "that we are careful to keep the ground clear of grass and weeds. Even when the grass does not grow near the roots of the young tree it prevents the free circulation of air. A cacao tree is a very delicate child for the first year or year and a half of its life. When it is three months old we mulch it — cover the ground about the roots with leaves — to enrich the soil later and also to keep the grass and weeds from coming up. The leaves of these shade trees are constantly falling, and they form a natural mulch that is good for the ground. That is one way in which they are our good servants.

"Perhaps you do not know that some plants and trees have the habit of gathering nitrogen from the air and returning it to the soil. The juaquiniquil does this, and the nitrogen it collects on its roots helps to feed the

young cacao. Our soil here is rich river soil, with just enough clay to make it a little heavier. But the young cacao is all the better for this extra fertilizing, and the shade tree does it with no instructions and no wages."

"Intelligent tree!" commented Mr. Carroll. "I wish all farming could be done by such laborers. But you must have to take care of the plantations in other ways?"

"Oh, indeed, there is much to do. After a year or a year and a half of growth the young tree starts to branch, and must be pruned by cutting off the top of the main shoot. After it has grown several branches we cut off all but a few — usually three to five. In that way, you see, all the nourishment the tree gets out of the soil goes into the fruit of those few remaining shoots. We use sharp knives and immediately seal the cut with coal tar. Then for the next two years, every time the section is cleaned, the water suckers or gormandizers have to be pruned away. The tree mustn't be allowed to waste its vitality on those; it must give all its life to the seeds."

"It seems to me," remarked Mrs. Carroll, "that a cacao plantation like this is a work of art."

"All farms should be," said the Frenchman, quietly.

"Do you plant the trees in boxes?" inquired Mr. Carroll. "I see you have nurseries over there."

"Sometimes we plant at stake, — that is, in the field where the tree is to stand," said M. Durand, leading the way to the nurseries. "Most often we plant in boxes. Of course we use the finest seeds for planting. We leave them for at least a day before planting in a mixture of water and ashes, ten pounds to thirty gallons. The ashes take off the pulp that sticks to the seeds, and make them less liable to attacks by insects. The tap

root is as long as the plant is high while it is in the nursery, and when it is as tall as the depth of the box we transplant it. In the meantime we have to watch our baby plants like real babies. You wouldn't believe how many enemies they have — insects, rats, lizards. The cacao planter must be, as you say, always on the job."

M. Durand smiled and sighed, but he was plainly very proud of his well-cared-for plantation.

"How long does it take for a tree to begin to bear? These don't look very old," commented Mr. Carroll.

"In three years the harvest begins, and increases up to eight years," said the planter. "I have seen trees over twenty-five years old in full bearing. It took us about five years to bring our new plantations to bearing. We had to cut down the woodlands and prepare the land, build fermenting and drying sheds, and collect our working force. Now we are getting from a thousand to fifteen hundred pounds per hectare each year."

"How much is a hectare?" asked Billy.

"About two and a half acres," said his father. "And the export value of cacao beans is about fifteen cents a pound."

The Frenchman gave a shrug and a wave of the hand. "Oh, it is a good plantation. But one must be on the job. Here we have to plant windbreaks on account of the strong mountain winds. Otherwise it is very good land."

They saw the beans drying and fermenting and packed for export, and finally went back to Managua feeling that chocolate would be more interesting to them all the rest of their lives.

"In France," said Mr. Carroll, "the cacao will be ground and flavored and made into chocolate in the

factory. There is another use for it which M. Durand didn't mention, — cocoa butter. Those nuts are forty per cent oil, and the oil can be squeezed out and sold separately. The dry powder that is left is made into cocoa."

"And I always thought cocoa was made of coconuts," reflected Elizabeth. Everybody smiled.

"It was a natural supposition," said her father. "But cacao gets its name from a native Indian word, *cacaútal*, meaning this very tree. 'Chocolate' is as near as the early travelers could come to it. Cocoa has nothing to do with the coconut tree at all. These are chocolate trees."

"I have found out something today," said Mrs. Carroll, "that I have wondered about ever since I was a little girl. Betty, you know that curious old piece of embroidery Great-grandmother did, of a basket of tropical fruits and flowers? I knew the peach and pear, of course, and the orange and grape, and somebody told me that one of the other fruits was a pomegranate, but nobody knew what the curious orange-colored, cone-shaped one in the middle was. We concluded it must be a fruit that the artist had made up out of his own head. But it was the fruit of the cacao."

"Our ancestors," remarked Mr. Carroll, "usually knew where the food they ate came from, which is more than most of us do. Cacao and pomegranate fruit must have been quite familiar to the artists of colonial times."

"That cacao plantation had four hundred years of history tucked away in it," said Mrs. Carroll. "Nicaragua and his Indians giving Gil González cacao beans to carry back to Spain; the people of Granada and León

cultivating their cacao with Indian slaves; then chocolate becoming fashionable in France and Spain and Italy and Austria, where you have it with a roll for breakfast; and finally chocolate candies making it profitable for this Frenchman to come to Nicaragua and use all his scientific training to make a chocolate tree bear the biggest and finest fruit it possibly can. What a country it is where even a common tree has a story like that behind it!"

"Most trees have," said Mr. Carroll, "if you know the story."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Wonders of a Wilderness

"What do you suppose Honduras will be like?" Elizabeth queried, as the little coastwise steamer puffed its way out of the harbor of Corinto. "Costa Rica wasn't like Panama, and Nicaragua wasn't like either of them."

"It was a nugget of pure gold."

Billy shook his head. "All I know is," he said, "there's an automobile road in it long enough for an all-day trip."

"It's a big country," said Elizabeth, studying the map, "and there don't seem to be many towns. Father said once it was a country of the future. I wonder if he meant it wasn't much settled yet?"

Mr. Carroll strolled that way a moment later, and Elizabeth put her question to him.

"I meant, Betty," he answered, as he sat down beside her, "that it is a country with great possibilities that will undoubtedly be realized some day, but probably not very soon. It is a very rich country in many ways.

There are immense forests of valuable woods, great tracts of good cattle country, land good for raising bananas and other fruits, and the indications are that there are mines of considerable value. But the people of the country are mostly poor, and the conditions are such that it would take a great deal of capital to make a living there. That is, things would have to be done on a big scale or not at all. Such a country is not settled a little at a time by settlers working with their hands. It must be opened up by men with money enough to spend all they will have to spend for machinery, labor, transportation, and making connections with the market. As things are, the greater part of it is a wonderful, almost untraveled wilderness."

"Dangerous?" asked Billy.

"More or less. I have been only to Tegucigalpa."

"Father went there before the road was made," said Lucía. "He shot a puma on the way."

Billy rather wished that the road had not been made at all. A country in which one could shoot pumas sounded enticing.

Honduras looked like a wilderness when they caught their first glimpse of it, coming into Amapalá. The great dark wooded height looming up behind the harbor suggested all sorts of wild animals.

On the way from the boat some one came up with a quick, firm step and called out cheerily, "Hey there! Wait a minute, Bob Carroll, — where did you drop down from?"

"Jim Hobart! where have you been all this time? When we had our class dinner everybody wondered if you were dead, lost, or gone to the wars," said Mr. Carroll, with a hearty grip of the other man's hand. The stranger

was tall and lean, brown as an Indian, with clothes that showed hard service. Mrs. Carroll welcomed her husband's old friend cordially, and the children, who had heard of him as a sort of Sindbad the Sailor, felt that this was the right sort of traveling companion for a place like Honduras.

Mr. Hobart proved to be on his way to Tegucigalpa, from which he intended to make expeditions into the forests. He had already been through the forests of Nicaragua and had nearly finished the tour he was making in the interests of a lumber company. He and his belongings filled the remaining space in the automobile next morning, and as this was not his first visit to Tegucigalpa the Carroll party saw a great many things on the road which otherwise might have escaped their notice.

"When I came here before," said Mr. Carroll, "I came from Puerto Cortés on mule-back, and it took a week."

"The next time," said Mr. Hobart, "you may do it

Pan American Union

The wharf and the custom house at Amapala, Honduras.

in a day and a half. They are working on that route by rail and automobile to Lake Yojoa, across the lake by steamer, and by rail to the capital."

"If they do that, it will open up the country."

"That's one reason why I am here. It may be easier to get lumber to market by and by than it has been. Do you know, Bob, the pine trees up here in the interior are so full of turpentine and resin that when they are first cut down they won't float! There's Peruvian balsam here, too, and mahogany, of course; rubber, mangrove, and a good many different kinds of dyewoods. There's no real reason why all the trade should go through the port of Amapala as it does."

"Except that, as I was saying to the children yesterday, Honduras is a country where things must be done on a big scale or not at all."

"Well, the company I'm here for is prepared to do them on a big scale; the bigger the better. And if I find what I expect to in prowling about their mahogany concessions, they will think Honduras is the happy hunting ground of the future."

When the party halted for luncheon, Mr. Hobart led them into the forest to a place he knew, where orchids such as none of them had seen blossomed on the trees. They had already seen roses, hibiscus, bougainvillea, and passion flowers growing in abundance. Some distance away there was a little stream, and suddenly Mr. Hobart pointed toward it. Something that looked like a dead tree trunk was moving along down the hill, and as they watched, it crept up around a hillock, lifted a long, wicked-looking snout, and then went sedately on until it was out of sight. It was a large alligator.

"That's rather unusual in this part of the country,"

said Mr. Hobart. "Nothing to worry about, however. The really dangerous wild beast of Honduras is the little mosquito that carries malaria."

Tegucigalpa proved to be a picturesque though not an old town, with a governor's house that looked like a castle. Mr. Hobart came in one day with the suggestion that they should all go with him into a mahogany concession and see the trees growing. After rather a long journey through the forest they came to a ranch house where an old cattle owner, an American, lived alone except for his Indian servants and his pets. He had a parrot, some pigeons, a favorite horse, and a huge puma which he called his watch-dog.

"Yes," he said, "I captured Nelly here when she was a cub — hauled her out of a hole in the rocks after I'd shot her mother. I've had some rough callers at times, but they're all quite respectful after they get a good look at Nelly."

"Did you ever have a puma for a pet, Mr. Hobart?" asked Billy, when they were in the saddle once more. The explorer laughed and shook his head.

"Not an experiment I should care to try. Pumas are sneaky brutes. They generally attack at night. During the day they trail any footsteps they find, keeping carefully out of sight. In the evening you swing your hammock between the trees, eat your supper of whatever you can get, and go to sleep. The puma creeps up till it is within pouncing distance, and lands on top of you. The servants hear the racket and come running up with machetes, and that is the end of the puma. The uncomfortable point is that it may be the end of you before the servants get there. The safe plan in a puma country is to have somebody on watch at night — and

make sure that it is a person who stays awake every minute.

"Jaguars do not often attack a man unless they are frightened or injured. A ranchman knows when the jaguars are getting hungry, because his cattle begin to disappear. Then he sends for a native hunter to attend to the jaguar. The hunter takes a long, sharp spear, and his servant a machete. When the hunter finds the jaguar, he attacks it and it springs at him. Just as it makes the leap he thrusts out his spear and if nothing goes amiss with the plan the jaguar lands on it and is instantly killed. If the jaguar happens to hold his paws together, the spear may not pierce the heart. Then the servant comes to the rescue with the machete, and between the two the jaguar usually is killed."

Presently Mr. Hobart halted his horse beside a tall tree unlike any other they had seen, with leaves rather like an ash. The foliage was unlike the other trees in color, having a tinge of yellowish red.

"Get out your cameras," he said; "this is mahogany. It's the only one in this part of the forest. They don't grow in groves. If you find two to an acre, you're in luck. My firm told me that some years ago they secured forty square miles of Honduras forest on which they had the right to cut mahogany, and they found just eighty trees on the whole tract. That's one thing that makes the wood so costly."

"How do they ever locate the trees?" asked Mrs. Carroll.

"You see the color of the foliage? A man who knows the lay of the land goes with the wood cutters and climbs the tallest tree he can find. If he sees a mahogany tree anywhere, he notes the location and leads the wood

cutters to it. Usually they have to hack a road as they go. This isn't the season for cutting — they do that in the rainy season. And they always cut the tree in the wane of the moon. They will tell you that at that time the tree is freer from sap, and the wood is sounder and of better color. They work at night because it's cooler. Then they have to leave it where it is until the dry season. When the ground is dry and hard, they can come in with oxen and haul it to some stream and float it on a raft to the coast. The quicker it is put on board ship the better, for once it is cut down the teredo is apt to get into it and bore holes. It's a slow grower and they've been cutting mahogany here ever since the sixteenth century. Yet I've seen a mahogany tree in Honduras forests that five men joining hands couldn't circle. The variety here is what is called wide-grained mahogany; sometimes it's called baywood. The furniture makers have machinery that can saw a board into 200 sheets of veneer. You can see what a tree like this one would be worth in such a business."

"And you say explorers have known of these forests from the first?" queried Mrs. Carroll, as they rode back toward Tegucigalpa.

"Practically. The wood is so hard that ordinary tools won't work it, and that probably saved the trees from being destroyed altogether. I don't know just when the wood came into fashion."

"If you had been brought up in an old town full of sea captains, you would know," laughed Mr. Carroll. "It was used in the fittings of sailing ships first. One of Raleigh's ship's carpenters found it out. Up to 1850 it was still used by old shipbuilders. It's a great wood for desks and cabinets, because it is so close and hard

A little native girl eating aguacate and tortillas. This is a very common complete meal in Central America.

and won't warp or shrink. Some of the solid mahogany doors and bureaus in old sea captains' houses would make a whole houseful of veneered furniture today."

"I think Honduras is a kind of Arabian Nights country," said Elizabeth, gravely, about a week later.

"Why?" asked Lucía.

"It's all so different from any other place we've been. You don't know what you're going to see next, but you know it's something you never would think of."

Among the curious things which they had seen, or been shown by Mr. Hobart or their father, Billy and Elizabeth counted these:

In Honduras one could live entirely on food that grows upon the trees without cultivation. Milk is found in a nut. Flour is made from manioc roots. Orchids cost nothing, while gasoline is seventy-five cents a gallon. Wheat and corn fields are seen in the tablelands, oranges, lemons, coconuts, bananas, cotton, and coffee grow in various parts of the country, according to the climate. Among the other products are sarsaparilla, ipecac, castor beans, pimento, capsicum, camphor, vanilla, gums, resins, and dyewoods. All these things — especially those which grow wild — bring high prices in other countries, and some of them are rare. And yet Honduras is poor.

One evening, as they were all sitting together making plans for the following day, Mr. Hobart was told that some one wished to see him. He came back a few minutes later, followed by an old Honduran.

"Juan doesn't speak any English," he said, "but I wanted you to see the man who discovered a gold mine up here in the mountains, years ago, just by luck and observation. I doubt if you can make much of his dialect, but he's going to tell how it happened, and I'll translate."

The old man began his story, and as the explorer translated it, it ran as follows:

"In some of the deep valleys among the mountains, as the señor well knows, the sun shines only for a little while at noon. One hot day I had been hunting in the San Juancito mountains, and when I came to such a valley I drank of the little stream at the bottom and followed it up the cañon to avoid the heat of the sun.

"As the sun crept farther and farther down the cliffs I saw that it shone in spots, which was very strange to me. Here and there I saw a gleam of bright sunlight while the rocks around were still in shadow. I climbed to the bank on which one of these spots of sunlight lay, and when I touched it, it fell into my hand. It was a nugget of pure gold.

"I had passed through the cañon many times before and seen no gold, but there had been a flood which made the channel deeper and brought down this gold. The señor knows that when I told him of the gold that I had found he brought his countrymen to see it, and that there is now a great mine in that valley. Señor Pierce has sent to ask the señor if he will not visit the mine with his friends before he leaves this place."

"Juan was a young fellow not much older than Billy here, when he found that gold," went on Mr. Hobart. "I was on my first expedition in Honduras, and his father had been my guide through that part of the forest. They were poor as crows, and when Juan made his find they didn't exactly know what to do about it. If they tried to work the mine themselves the news would get out, and they might be robbed, and if they let foreigners hear of it the whole valley might be taken away from them. Of course they could work it only with the gold-pan, as the early Californians did. To do that, the miner fills a shallow pan with gravel and sand

and water from the stream and twirls it around with a peculiar motion that throws the water and gravel out and leaves a dark, heavy soil with whatever gold there is, at the bottom. Gold, you know, is heavy. But in that kind of mining you only scratch the surface and all the gold in sight may be cleaned up in a year or two.

"Finally Juan persuaded his father to let him tell me about it as a secret. I prospected around there for a month or two. I was sure from what I found that this gold came from far up in the hills, but I found indications of silver. To make a long story short I secured their permission to take up the matter in New York with people I knew to be honest, and they came down here and began mining silver. Juan and his family got their share of the good luck, and own a very nice cattle ranch now. Pierce, the mine superintendent, finding that Juan was riding in to see me, sent word that he'd be glad to see you and show you the mine. Would you like to go?"

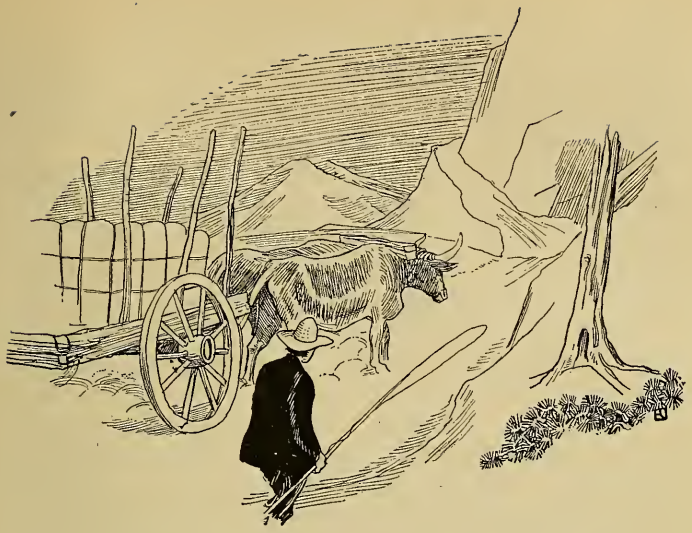
Of course there was a delighted chorus of acceptance.

"I'm sorry not to go with you," said Mr. Hobart, "but I have to stay and meet some men here tomorrow. You'd better start tomorrow morning. Since you have to leave at the end of the week, you can't lose any time."

"Father," said Billy, when the packing for the little journey was done and they were about to go early to bed for the sake of a full night's rest, "do you suppose there are gold mines that could be found here some day?"

"I shouldn't be surprised, son," said Mr. Carroll. "And there are undoubtedly other mines nearly as valuable. Honduras contains almost every known mineral. The gold is mixed more or less with silver, galena, zinc, and sulphides. There are paying quantities of iron, antimony, copper, and mercury. Traces have

been found of opals, marble, chalk, kaolin (porcelain clay), saltpeter, aluminum, and asphalt. There are also deposits of coal and oil. When the country is once fairly settled and has a proper supply of capital and labor, there is no knowing what may be found. But after you have seen the mine we are going to visit you will understand better the reasons why capital is necessary to unearth all these various treasures."



"They passed ox carts loaded with supplies for the mine."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Treasure of San Juancito

A little before eight o'clock the Carroll party set off, old Juan and his son Estéban riding with them, for their three days among the mountains. As they passed the legation of the United States, which is on the mountain side overlooking Tegucigalpa, Mrs. Carroll remarked:

"I believe the only thing I should be surprised to see in Honduras would be a piece of apple pie. Perhaps if we were to dine at the legation we should get that."

"You might come across it almost anywhere," said Mr. Carroll. "The railroad men, bookkeepers, skilled mechanics, and clerks in the towns of Honduras are mainly Americans, and many of them have their families

with them. Skilled labor is rather scarce here. Most of the labor that can be had is good only for such a business as raising bananas."

The first part of the journey was a steady climb up a mountain trail wide enough for an automobile, but full of gullies, with now and then a deep hole washed out by the rain. Now and then they passed ox carts loaded with supplies for the mine. Billy said they must expect to camp out when night came, since at the rate they were proceeding they certainly would not reach the mine in a day.

"I guess that is a machine like the one they sent Mr. Frost," called Elizabeth, who was riding ahead with her father. "Billy! Lucía! Just look here, — did you ever see such a long team of oxen?"

They were nearing the Río Tigre (Tiger River), and just ahead was a huge piece of machinery, weighing several tons. The head of the men in charge of the team told Mr. Carroll that the truck had been built especially for the big machine. Ten yoke of oxen drew it. The foreman said that it would take thirty-five days to travel the distance of twenty-five miles. At any particularly bad place in the road they would have to build a derrick to lift the machinery over.

As they went farther into the forest it grew more and more dense, until they could sometimes see only a few feet from the road. Many of the things Mr. Hobart had told them were useful now, for without his help they would never have known what to call half the trees, birds, and animals they saw. When it came to flowers, they were more at home. Lucía had been taught botany by her father, and had once gone with the Carrolls to a great botanical garden where she showed them many

orchids and other tropical flowers she knew at home. Señor Bastido had told them that more than eighty kinds of orchids were found in these mountains, and Mrs. Carroll began to think that they should find all of them on this one ride. There were wonderful tree-ferns and other ferns, palms of many kinds, and brilliant flowering shrubs. One kind of palm tree Mr. Hobart had pointed out as the cohune palm, whose nuts yield an oil that is a good substitute for coconut oil.

About one o'clock Estéban, who was riding ahead with Billy, pointed to a little group of buildings. "The plantel," he said "— the mine outfit." As they rode along the winding trail they caught a glimpse again and again of the buildings of the mine, but it was more than an hour before they finally reached it. Mr. Pierce, who had caught sight of them some time before, was on

Oxen are still extensively used in Central America.

the porch of the hotel with his wife to welcome the party, and evidently felt that any friends of his friend Hobart were his friends.

It was like a little American town set down in this wild country, for at such a distance from supplies the miners had to provide for many of their own needs on the spot. All around it was a high stockade to keep in the mules and cattle and keep out persons who had no business at the mine. There were three gates in this fence. Below was the little town where many of the native miners lived, and tiny villages scattered here and there among the mountains were the homes of others. The Americans, fifty or more men and half a dozen women, lived here, the married men in small houses, the single men in long, barrack-like buildings, boarding at the hotel.

"How many native miners are there?" asked Mrs. Carroll.

"More than a thousand just now," answered Mr. Pierce.

The settlement had its machine shop, its carpenter shop, its sawmill, and its hospital. There was a tennis court for the Americans. In the store could be found most things likely to be needed by those who lived here, but as Mrs. Pierce said, there were times when one would give anything to be able to shop. "I never appreciated my privileges, as Grandfather used to say, until I came here," she said, laughing. "When I go home I shall want to go down Main Street and buy something at every store in town."

"Betts," said Billy, as they passed the stables, "did you ever suppose there were so many mules in the world?"

There was the mill where the great machines crushed the ore and got it ready to ship to the United States.

"At every turn the question of labor comes up," said Mr. Pierce. "We have to take what we can get and do what we can. There isn't any middle class. It's no place for small farmers. It isn't like any other country."

"I see," said Mr. Carroll. "And for that very reason dishonest schemers can send out circulars telling people that they can come down here and make a fortune with a little bank account. To any one at home it would seem impossible that so much wealth could exist in a country and be so hard to get out."

"Well," said the superintendent, as he led the way to the dining-room, "when you go through the mine with me tomorrow you'll see that it isn't the cheapest undertaking in the world to get silver even out of a perfectly good mine."

Dinner was hardly over before the three children nearly dropped asleep in their chairs. The long ride in the mountain air, the afternoon's sight-seeing, and the excellent dinner were more effective than soothing sirup. Mr. and Mrs. Carroll soon followed their example — the more willingly as Mr. Pierce told them that breakfast next morning would be at half-past five.

Three blasts of the whistle awakened them all at five o'clock, and Betty gave a cry of astonishment and delight as she looked out of the window. "Mother! Daddy!" she called — "look at the clouds! You never saw anything like it!"

Lucía was dressing rapidly, but not losing any of the wonderful sight, and Billy had jumped into his clothes as only a boy can do and had run out of doors. The broad valley with the gleaming river had disappeared, and they seemed to be looking out upon vast white banks of snow. The sun, just rising over the mountains

Pan American Union

The parish church at Tegucigalpa. The buildings on the hill in the background are those of the American legation.

twenty or thirty miles away, tinged the white masses with gold, and the green forest rose above them across the valley. What seemed to be snow was the mist that rose at night from the river, in a dense cloud.

"Now you see, Betty," said her mother, "how the clouds in the sky look so white at a distance, and so gray when they hang low. We are looking down on clouds just now, but if we were in the valley we should be in a thick fog."

By six o'clock breakfast was over and they were all mounted on mules and riding toward the mine office with Mr. Pierce. They left the little settlement by one of the gates and went on up the main road a little way, and then turned off to the office, where hundreds of miners were waiting to begin their day's work. For some little time Mr. Pierce was occupied with giving each man his supply of candles, caps, fuse, powder, and steel. When this had been done they all rode on to the place where they were to enter the mine.

"There are fourteen levels in the mine," the superintendent explained. "The level we just left is Lower Two Hundred. This is Upper One Hundred and Fifty, and between lies a level called Zero. At the lowest, Lower Six Fifty, the ore is hauled out in those little cars you see at the mill. On the other levels we take out only waste."

The first thing to which Mr. Pierce called their attention was a huge machine run by electricity, which sends fresh air into every part of the mine. "This is where we shall put the machine you saw on the road — when we get it," he explained. "This is the compressor."

In the shops men were sharpening steel tools with which the miners would loosen the ore.

"Now if you will climb into this mud-car we will have a ride underground," said Mr. Pierce. "Yesterday you rode over this mountain; today you'll ride through it. Sit low and near the middle; it won't do to risk touching the electric wires or getting hit by any of the chutes we pass."

Presently the little car halted where a man was working with an electric drill. Farther on, they paused again to see two men working together with a hand drill, one holding and the other driving.

"What's that for?" asked Billy.

"At three o'clock this afternoon all these men drilling holes will stop drilling, put sticks of dynamite, cap, and fuse in the holes, light the fuse, and go away from there at once."

"Doesn't it sound like the Fourth of July when it goes off?" asked Betty, fearfully.

"If you are at the plantel this afternoon at three o'clock, you won't hear a sound," answered Mr. Pierce, smiling.

The car stopped at the entrance and they climbed out, realizing that they had actually been through the mountain.

"I know now how the world must look to a rat," said Mrs. Carroll.

In a sawmill not far from the entrance they found an old Michigan lumberman who had been in the country so long that he did not care to go back home. Oxen were hauling logs to be sawed into lumber for the mine. Many were oak, and there were maple, pine, and many other kinds of timber.

When they came out of the tunnel on the mountain side, they found everything wrapped in a fog so thick that it looked dangerous to start down the trail.

"The fog we saw in the valley has climbed up," said Billy.

"It always does," said Betty. "Don't you remember how the fog climbed up over our camp last year? But this is whiter."

"It is whiter because there is more of it," said Lucía. "As the sun comes up it will roll away."

Sure enough, by the time they reached the hotel the air was clear and they could see the whole valley.

"Father," said Billy, as they sat down to rest a few minutes, "did you know there was so much to a mine besides the digging?"

Mr. Carroll smiled. "I knew in a general way that there was a good deal, but I never went through a mine like this before. I suspect the most interesting thing is to come."

"What's that?"

"As soon as mother is rested a little we are going through the big mill where the ore is crushed. I warn you it will be rather a tiring trip."

Mrs. Carroll decided she had had enough sight-seeing for one day, and Lucía, who had no special interest in machinery, volunteered to keep her company. But Billy, who would not have missed a single detail of the mining business, and Elizabeth, who never would be left behind when Billy was interested, started off with Mr. Carroll and one of the engineers to see the great mill.

The children counted the steps down from the general offices and found that there were not quite five hundred. First they saw the ore dumped into an enormous bin from the cars which ran from the mine. They went below and saw it crushed into a fine, mudlike mass by

huge stamps that kept up a constant pounding. As they went on down they saw it ground and washed and treated with chemicals until it reached the large presses at the bottom of the mill. From these it went in solution to the top for its final treatment in the refinery.

"I wish we could go in solution," sighed Elizabeth, as they climbed the last of the stairs. "This is like the Washington Monument without any elevator."

In the refinery they saw the men taking from the canvas of the presses a fine black powder which was 95 per cent silver. This powder was packed in little boxes to be shipped to the United States. In the vault they saw rows of these boxes, each containing a thousand dollars' worth of the precious dust. The children looked at it rather solemnly.

"I don't think I ever saw such a valuable place as this before," said Elizabeth.

When they got back to the hotel again they found Mrs. Carroll and Lucía, fresh, clean, and rested, sitting on the porch, and were glad enough to join them. At four o'clock there was a match game of tennis in the court near the general office, and they all went with the other Americans to see it. The spectators sat on the wall, and tea was served.

After dinner they sat talking with their hospitable fellow countrymen until the moon came up. The valley by moonlight was like fairyland, the river winding southward to Fonseca Bay like a thread of pure silver.

"Why don't they have a steamboat up the river from Amapala? Doesn't this river go there?" inquired Billy. "Amapala is on Fonseca Bay."

"Too many rapids," said Mr. Pierce. "There may be a railway some day up the valley."

"The Spaniards didn't have silver mines here, did they?" Betty inquired presently from her perch on her father's knee. "They didn't have machines and things to get the ore ground up?"

"No, pussy, but they explored Honduras rather carefully," answered Mr. Carroll. "We haven't found their tracks in Tegucigalpa because it is a new city. Up to 1885 the capital was at Comayagua, where Cortés and his engineers put it."

"How do you suppose they ever did that job with the instruments they had?" asked one of the mining engineers. "I knew a fellow who was with the surveyors when they went over the ground in the 'eighties. He said Cortés planned to found Comayagua exactly halfway between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. When the modern engineers went through, they found that

A pack train loading potatoes before a prominent Central American wholesale store.

the plaza of Comayagua was only about three miles from the center of the country."

"What made them build a new capital?" asked Billy, feeling a decided respect for Cortés and his Spaniards.

"Comayagua wasn't popular for some reason," said Mr. Carroll. "During the eighty years after Honduras gained its independence, the population dropped from 30,000 to about 5000. It wasn't a place I should choose to live in when I saw it. The fact that a city is in the geographical middle of the country isn't really any reason for living there, you know."

"Cortés would like to be on hand when our mules get under way tomorrow," said the engineer. "You ought to see that, Mr. Carroll. You can wait till nine o'clock all right, can't you?"

"To see the mules?" asked Mr. Carroll.

"To see the mules with $120,000 worth of silver on their backs," answered the young man. "That's about what you expect to send down this time, isn't it, Mr. Pierce?"

"Almost that," the superintendent assented. "Fifty-nine mules with two boxes of precipitate to each mule. You'd better get a snapshot of those animals; they're really quite uncommon."

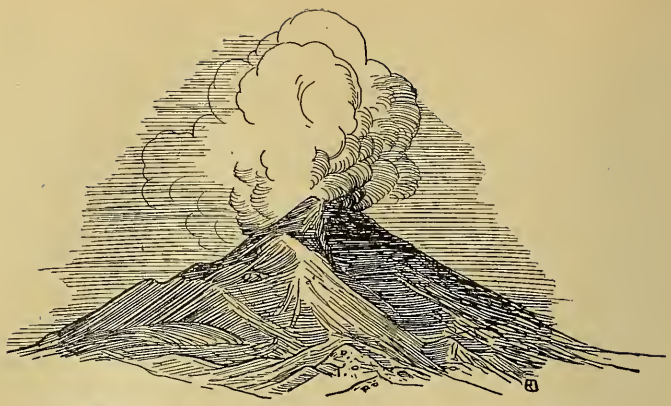
"I think we must," said Mr. Carroll.

At nine the next morning, accordingly, the Carrolls, ready to start on their own journey, were standing in front of the hotel to see the mules start on theirs. Besides the animals loaded with treasure there were half a dozen extra mules to carry supplies for the trip or replace any mules that gave out on the long trip to Amapala. A dozen Honduran soldiers with old-fashioned guns were acting

as guards, but Mr. Pierce said there was really no risk of robbery.

"The boxes are too heavy to carry," he explained, "and if robbers were foolish enough to try it and by any chance got a part of the precipitate they could not sell it; so what use would it be to them? We have never had a robbery yet. It was tried two or three times, but the thieves were caught."

After seeing the last pair of wagging mule-ears disappear down the trail, the Carrolls took their own way back to Tegucigalpa, feeling that they had had a most wonderful experience.



"The idea of a live volcano was a rather disturbing one."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Small Republic of Salvador

The Carrolls on reaching Amapala found to their surprise that Señor Bastido was awaiting them. Also to their surprise and to Elizabeth's especial regret, he announced that he was going to take Lucía back to the ranch with him. He had not expected to be able to join her so soon, and did not feel that he could get along without her a day longer than he had to.

"Why not come with us?" asked Mrs. Carroll. The Central American shook his head.

"I have some work that must be done," he said, "and there are affairs at the ranch that need attention. We shall meet later, in Guatemala. I promise to come to your house-warming whenever that may be."

Elizabeth could not help feeling rather lonely when they took the boat westward and left Lucía and her father awaiting the next boat in the other direction. She

was rather glad to find soon after the voyage had begun, that her mother had made friends with a family of Salvadoreans, a mother and two daughters. The daughters were thirteen and sixteen years of age. Beatriz had spent three years at a French convent school, and her father and mother and Carmelita had been to Panama to meet her. The father of the family, Señor Barranco, had a plantation not far from San Salvador, and he and Mr. Carroll discovered that they had many friends in common.

It is the ambition of Salvadoreans who have property, to educate their children in Europe. They are to be met with in London and Paris oftener than in New York or Boston. The students and travelers from Salvador who return and become part of the life of their own country, as nearly all do, have a very decided influence on the activities of that small republic. Salvador is a very up-to-date country.

Mr. Carroll commented on the tendency of Salvadoreans — and, indeed, Central Americans generally — to visit Europe rather than the United States.

"I cannot say how it is with a Costa Rican or a Guatemaltecan," replied Señor Barranco, "but speaking for our own people, I think there are good reasons for it. When we travel, we usually travel for pleasure. If we go to a city in the United States, we are regarded simply as foreigners. You have a large population of foreign birth or descent, it is true, but they regard themselves as American, citizens of your country, which of course we are not. If we do not speak English very well, the chances are that we shall have no one to talk to. In New York, it is true, there are certain places where Central Americans or South Americans can find their

own people, but when one visits another country one would like to know its people.

"In Europe we find those of our own class, of whatever nationality, generally able to speak French if not Spanish. In any case they do not think us ignorant for not speaking English. I had my daughters taught English for the same reason that I learned it myself, because I feel sure that it will be more and more the common language of commerce on this side of the world, and of international social life also. Your people will not learn languages if they can help it. It is quite exceptional for my wife to find a lady from your country who can talk with her as Señora Carroll is now talking, in Spanish."

"My reason for having my children taught Spanish," said Mr. Carroll, smiling, "was much the same as yours for having your children taught English. I hope that in the near future the republics of the New World and especially those of this continent will be much more closely allied than they have been. In that case, the greater the number of our people who know both Spanish and English, the better will be our understanding on international questions of all kinds. One might almost say that Spanish is the universal language south of the Río Grande and English the common tongue north of it. Portuguese and Spanish are so nearly akin that to know one is to know more or less of the other."

La Unión, the first port the steamer was to reach in Salvador, can be seen on leaving Amapala, and during this conversation the steamer had been winding in and out among picturesque islands and through narrow channels, while the quartermaster constantly called out the results of the soundings. At this point Mr. Carroll beckoned Billy from the other side of the deck to see a

boiling spring near the edge of one island. The jets of steam were in plain sight.

"Dad," said Billy, presently, "what is that man calling out every now and then for?"

"To prevent us from running aground," said his father. "The water is so shoal here that we have to keep twisting in and out to get into the harbor at all, and they have to take soundings continually to make sure of the depth. It was fearfully hot here the last time I came, but we are in luck — there's a good breeze."

There is no good wharf at any of the three ports of Salvador, La Unión, La Libertad, and Acajutla. The steamship lines are more concerned with freight than with passengers, human beings and live stock being landed or taken on board in whatever manner is possible. La Unión is the port for San Miguel, an inland town of about 25,000 population. Nevertheless, the loading and unloading occupied the greater part of twenty-four hours. Several passengers appeared, two or three well dressed, the others bare-headed and very informally clad. Parrots and monkeys appeared among the freight, the parrots having a great deal to say for themselves, mainly in Spanish, and the monkeys expressing their views freely, in the language of monkeys. Altogether, for so small a town, La Unión was quite animated.

As the steamer crept along the shore, Beatriz and Carmelita pointed out to Betty and Billy the cone-shaped peaks in the mountain ranges seen against the sky. The mountains here are very near the shore. They saw the rainbow wings of flying fish, and once there was a rush to the other side of the deck when a whale was seen spouting in the distance.

On reaching La Libertad several of the passengers had to go ashore. They were taken in a basket holding four, raised from the deck and over the side by means of a derrick and lowered into the lighter. There was a great deal of squealing and nervous laughter, and a little lady with a great deal of black hair and very pretty hands and feet nearly had hysterics.

"It is not comfortable," admitted Beatriz, "especially when the sea is rough and the weather not warm."

"But to scream," said little Carmelita, with a lift of her dainty chin, "that is so silly!"

Betty was not sure that she would not have screamed herself ten minutes later if it had not been for that remark.

Shots were heard on the other side of the boat, followed by shouting, and a crowd gathered where Mr. Carroll and Billy were standing. But they reappeared almost at once, laughing.

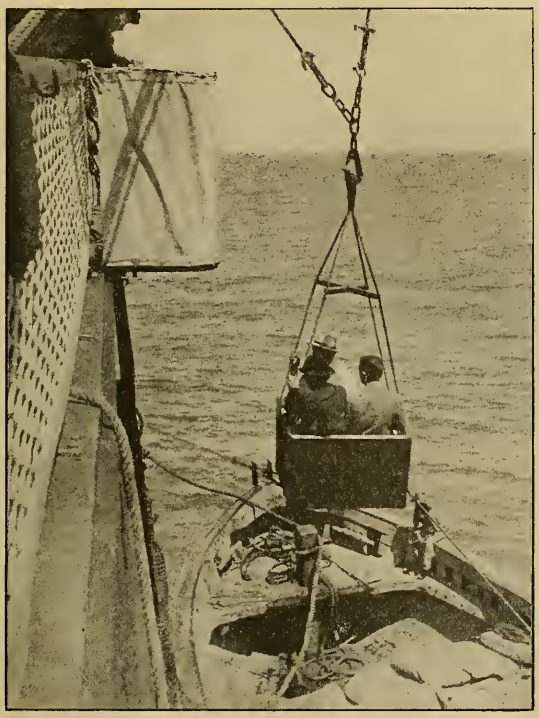
"They are shooting sharks," said Mr. Carroll, as he came toward his wife and daughter. "Come and see the fun."

The dark back-fin of the shark sheared through the water, and another shot cracked sharply. By the time the sharks had all either been shot or had wisely departed to the depths of the sea, it was growing dark.

"If we reach Acajutla at night, you will see the Lighthouse of Salvador," said Carmelita, proudly.

"Izalco, the great volcano," explained Beatriz. "At night you may see the eruption."

The idea of a live volcano in view of the steamer was a rather disturbing one to Elizabeth, but when she saw it she quite forgot to be afraid. There was a sudden glow of flame at the summit of the mountain, then a ribbon of red ran down its side. It was astonishing to



Pan American Union

Landing passengers at La Libertad.

learn that this ribbon was at least half a mile wide and a hundred miles long. Beatriz and Carmelita seemed to regard the volcano with real affection, somewhat as if it were a tame elephant. The Carrolls felt as if it would be a little impolite to suggest that there could possibly be any danger in a pet volcano.

"It isn't tame enough to be commonplace," Mr. Carroll answered dryly, when his wife said something

of the sort. The Salvadoreans had gone to make ready for their landing. "There have been disturbances more or less for more than a hundred years, and lava sometimes flows for weeks at a time."

"Señora Barranco's father has a plantation quite near the foot of it," said Mrs. Carroll. "All she had to say on the subject was, 'It enriches the soil.'"

"Well, it does; she's perfectly right about that," assented Mr. Carroll. "Incidentally this is the only young volcano with which I am acquainted. It made its first appearance in the latter part of the eighteenth century."

"Daddy, how could it?" asked Betty.

"What did it look like?" queried Billy.

"There was a series of earthquakes first; then the earth opened and streams of fiery lava shot out. Showers of hot ashes fell on the surrounding country, and witnesses have recorded that for a long time there were explosions every minute or two. In a few weeks the volcano rose to a height of almost 4000 feet."

"Have they had any more signs of new volcanoes?" asked Billy, soberly.

"Not exactly. But it's time for us to go ashore. Here come the Barrancos."

Evidently the Salvadoreans had had a consultation while making their arrangements for landing, for Mr. and Mrs. Carroll were agreeably surprised and Billy and Elizabeth excited and pleased, at receiving a cordial invitation to visit the Barrancos during their stay. This was indeed good fortune. They could spare only a few days for Salvador, and had not hoped to do much more than see the capital and perhaps a little of the country.

After her long absence from her own country Beatriz

Pan American Union

A rocky island in Lake Ilopango, Salvador, pushed up through 750 feet of water by volcanic action.

was evidently delighting in every familiar sight and sound, and partly for her pleasure and partly, the Carrolls felt sure, for their own, an excursion was arranged to Lake Ilopango, near the capital. This is one of the most curious of lakes. It is on a plateau about 1600 feet high and surrounded by high mountains, and is about 25 square miles in area. In 1879 this lake suddenly rose five feet. The rivers which form its outlets changed from sluggish streams to rapids and waterfalls. Then it began to sink so fast that the people feared they were going to lose it altogether through the channel of the Río Jiboa. There were explosions and earthquake shocks. Then gases began puffing out of the middle of the lake. Next a little island poked up its head. It grew larger, and other little islands appeared around it. Then volumes of fiery lava and ashes broke out. By

day all Salvador was darkened, and at night all Salvador was bright. When the fireworks were finally over, an island 150 feet high had been formed in the middle of the lake, and this the Carroll children beheld with some awe.

"Dad, was this what you meant when you said there hadn't been signs of other new volcanoes, or not exactly?" asked Billy, as they strolled along the shore of the lake a little apart from the others.

"Yes, I had this in mind. It may remain just as it is, and it may not."

"Well, if it's a baby volcano maybe it'll be grown up when we see it again," said Billy, cheerfully. "But I should think the people in this neighborhood would like it better as it is."

The volcano of Izalco in eruption, showing the crater from the Sonsonate side.

They found the Barranco plantation a charming old place on land which, as Carmelita proudly said, had been Spanish land and Barranco land for three hundred years. Their luck was even more unusual than it seemed. Señor Barranco had a balsam camp in the remote forest of his estate, and at this season of the year the balsam-gathering was going on. As this tree is found only in a limited strip of territory along the Pacific coast, chances to see such work are rare.

Señor Barranco, with his sons Luis and Ramón, tall young men who rode like *vaqueros* and shot like huntsmen, went with the Carrolls to see the *balsameros* at work.

These men are natives who live in the woods and know exactly how the tree can be cut to extract the juice without injury to its life. The tree does not usually grow in groups but singly, and is a stout tree about 40 inches in diameter and 80 to 115 feet high. It is a relative of the acacia, and also of the bean and pea family. It is a very beautiful tree, with white outer bark, a red inner bark, white blossoms, and fruit pale yellow with a single seed. The wood is hard and durable, and the wood of the furniture in Beatriz's newly furnished sitting-room was of this tree. A Salvadorean carpenter had used it in making a clever copy of some old French furniture. While there are almost no furniture factories in Central America, there are many workmen who can make a good copy of any imported piece they have as a model.

The *balsamero*, as Ramón explained, first scratches the tree with a blunt instrument at the time of the new moon, just deeply enough for the inner bark to be exposed. The sap from this cut is collected on pieces of cloth attached to the scratch or *ventana* (window), as it is called. When soaked, this cloth is replaced by dry pieces. The cloths

are collected from time to time and placed in a kettle of boiling water for half an hour. The impurities rising to the surface are skimmed off, and the balsam is squeezed out, collected in a mass, and delivered to the dealer as crude balsam. The merchant heats it in a caldron to clarify it, and finally it is poured into rectangular tins holding about 35 pounds each, for shipping. Salvador's yearly export of "Peruvian balsam," as it is called, amounts to about 130,000 pounds.

"I don't see why it's called balsam of Peru," said Betty.

"It is produced in Peru also, and while the balsam of Salvador has always been well known it was shipped across the Isthmus and went with the other balsam to Europe," her father explained.

"What's it good for?" inquired Billy.

"The Indians used it in surgery, for it is a natural antiseptic and has a wonderful curative property on a wound. The Spaniards learned its usefulness from them. It is good for some skin diseases, and now I believe they are using cinnamic acid, one of its chief constituents, in treating tuberculosis."

In staying with the Barrancos, Elizabeth and Billy found their association with Lucía valuable. Not only had they a fair understanding of Spanish, but they understood the Central American way of life well enough to accept easily even customs that seemed strange. Furniture was arranged in a much more formal way than it would be in an American home. When friends were invited to meet the Carrolls, although it happened to be a very hot day, every one appeared in the most careful formal dress.

"When I first visited Salvador," Mr. Carroll had

Pan American Union

A balsam tree cut with a trapo.

told them before they came, "I had occasion to go to a funeral. Every one walked to the grave, and the men listened bare-headed in the broiling sun, to the funeral oration. Any one who had made a comment showing the least disrespect of this proceeding would have given mortal offense. It isn't much to be willing to wear a frock coat and silk hat on an occasion when one is expected to, and not to do it is very bad form. It impresses the Salvadoreans somewhat as it would impress us if a man came to dinner and between courses pushed back his chair and put his feet on the table."

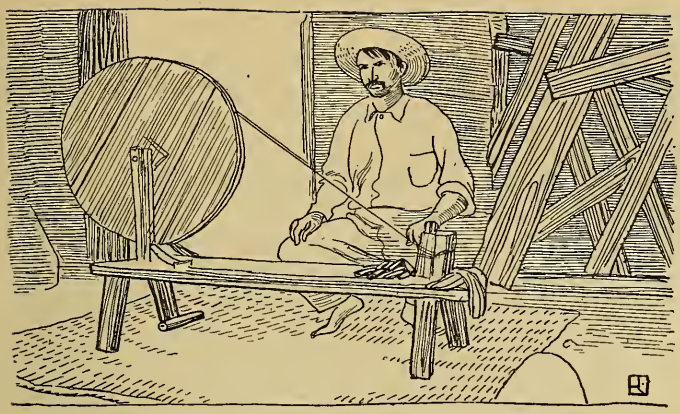
"Father," said Elizabeth privately, the day before they went away, "I wish you'd tell me of something nice that I could do for Beatriz and Carmelita. I do like them so much."

"Nothing easier," said Mr. Carroll. "Make a note in that little travelers' notebook I gave you, of the feast day of any Central American you meet, — not the birthday, but the feast of the patron saint. When that comes

round, send some remembrance — a card or telegram, if nothing more. Central Americans value a gift according to the sentiment, not the cost."

"I never saw people send as many telegrams as they do here," Betty said thoughtfully. "Beatriz sent one to her cousin when her cousin's baby was christened."

"That is a Salvadorean custom," answered her father. "When any family event occurs — a birth, a christening, a wedding, an illness, anything — it is proper to send a telegram expressing one's interest. But the people are far from spending all their time and thought on social customs. Salvador is one of the best-governed countries I know, and whether because of the unexpected earthquakes and other changes or not, the inhabitants are as a rule uncommonly wide-awake and well informed."



A native spinner in Central America.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Keeping Shop in Salvador

One morning, as the Carrolls were in San Salvador with Señora Barranco and her daughters, Beatriz exclaimed, "Look, mamacita, isn't that a new shop?"

"Quite new," answered the señora, after a glance through her lorgnette at the bright, freshly painted doorway. "Cárdenas — it must be the son of old Miguel Cárdenas who sold fruit on that corner so many years. I remember his telling me that the boy had a position with some San Francisco firm."

A little later, as Mrs. Carroll had some shopping to do and the Salvadoreans a visit to pay to friends in the country, the party separated, and found themselves passing the new shop again. Mr. Carroll paused.

"Suppose we try this place," he suggested. "I believe this is a young man I met when I was in San Francisco last year. I'd like to see how his plan is working out.

When I made his acquaintance he was drawing a good salary from a big fruit company and looking forward to a business of his own."

A brand-new shop, too new to be overrun with customers, is rather a fascinating place, and Betty and Billy had never had a chance to explore one before. The young merchant was brown, slim, and good looking, and had a certain sparkle in his eye and enthusiasm in his voice which made it clear that he believed in himself and his business. He and Mr. Carroll soon got into a conversation about the general conditions of trade in Salvador. It was evident that the Salvadorean had kept his eyes open during his apprenticeship in the United States.

"There are all sorts of small things which have to be considered," he said, "and though they seem unimportant they really matter a good deal. For instance, I am taking care of orders for some of the small shopkeepers in other Central American towns, which I send in with my own. I have a friend in the United States who fills them for me, and knows what I want. He is a clerk in one of the big importing houses."

"You find it better to order through them than direct from the manufacturers?"

"Very often it is a great advantage. For example, here is an order for a small lot of hosiery of different sizes and colors. This merchant wants to give his customers as much variety as possible. His is the only shop in a small place, and no lady wants to wear exactly the same thing every other lady she knows is wearing. Now, we took really a good deal of trouble to fill that order. My friend had to buy of three manufacturers to get all the sizes. You see, in a great house like that, with connections all over the country, of which they keep

track by card catalogs, it is possible to know where to send for goods without wasting time."

"I see," said Mr. Carroll. "It must be rather an advantage to the house also to have you as a link between their business and the country merchant."

"I think it may prove so," said the young man, modestly. "Here, for example, is a new lot of perfumery. I ordered the bottles to be of a certain size because I could get the best rates on them in that way. A change in the size of the bottles would have meant a change in the duty. I ordered also a certain style of bottle because I knew that some of my customers would be familiar with it, and it would be just as well to have that extra advantage. My friend found that he could not get that exact style of bottle because it was no longer made, so he sent me the best he could find. Some of my customers like it even better, and some don't. It is a mistake for any one to think that Central Americans are always looking for the latest novelty as the people of your big cities do. They are much more likely to demand something they have bought before."

"And yet you have, if anything, more variety here than there would be in such a shop at home," said Mrs. Carroll, as she examined some bright cotton goods suited to cushion covers.

"That is another matter in which our trade is unlike yours," said the merchant. "A storekeeper in the United States when ordering bolts of goods will ask for perhaps fifty per cent of the color most worn, twenty-five per cent of the next most popular, and the rest scattering. I am speaking, of course, of the small shops in small towns. Here, as we have the metric system, my order is made out in tens or in fives, and each set is of separate

colors. When it comes in the cloth is laid out in bolts on a table, and the shopkeeper from some mountain village orders a bolt of each set."

"What's this for?" asked Elizabeth, fingering some brilliant colored drilling.

"Mattresses or awnings. We sell a great deal of this gray drilling to the Indian and ladino farmers for trousers and overalls. Here again the importing house has an advantage. The duty in every Central and South American country is different, and often the rates are according to the width of the cloth or the form of the consignment. The importing house keeps track of the various rates in the different countries, and secures goods on which there will be the lowest possible duty to pay."

"Do you have much trouble with breakage?" asked Mr. Carroll. "I see that you carry more or less glass and china."

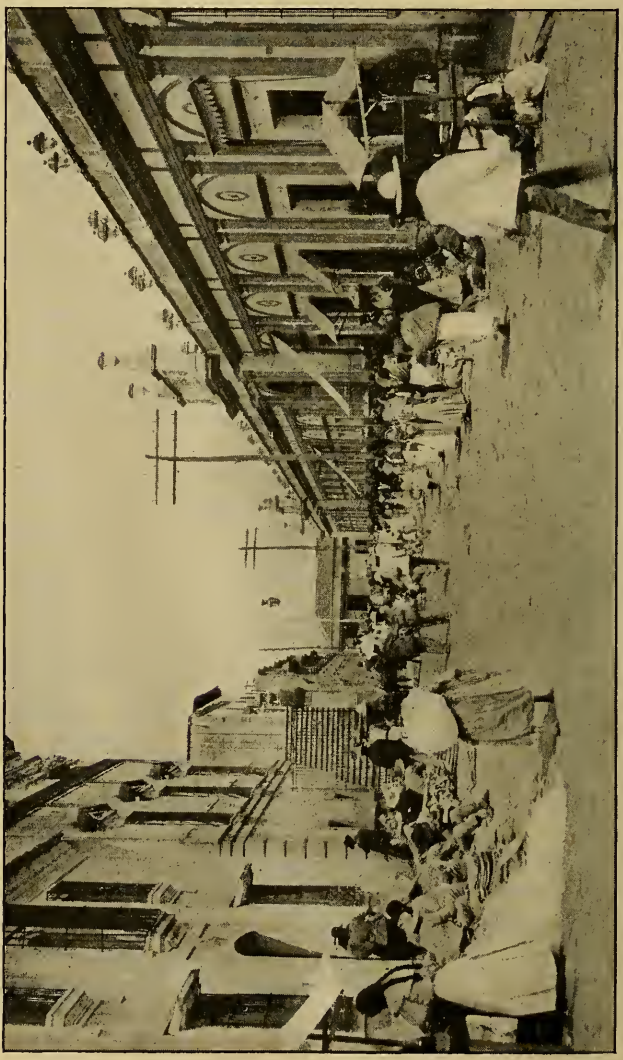
Cárdenas gave a little shrug. "It might be worse," he said. "One firm with which I deal packs so carefully that seventy-five per cent of its glass arrives in perfect condition. I have been told by other merchants here that they have had orders come in with not more than ten per cent of the glass unbroken. But I think that your manufacturers are beginning to understand this need for careful packing. They do not always understand, however, why our orders are often so small. Climatic conditions may be such that goods left on shelves will spoil if not sold. We have damp, we have insects, we have heat, and most of our people cannot settle their bills till the crops are in. The retail merchant has to wait for his money, and if the wholesaler or the manufacturer makes him buy in large lots and pay cash you

can see that he needs a big capital. With a long credit and careful buying, he can get along all right, but he cannot change the customs of the country."

Going to the rear of the shop, Cárdenas took from a high shelf a box of toilet goods. "Mr. Carroll," he said, "since you seem to be interested in the improvement of trade between your country and ours, here is something which your merchants will — what do you say? — have to look out about. As I have told you, our people are disposed to buy goods they know, and sometimes, not knowing English, they have to judge by the general appearance of the package, the trademark if there is one, and the color and style of the label. In the competition for our trade some of your unscrupulous rivals will do things like this."

At a little distance the wrapper on the cake of soap and the label on the perfumery looked exactly like that of a well-known brand, but although the color of the paper and style of type were the same, and the trademark almost the same, the article was not even American.

"You see," said young Cárdenas, "if your best goods are imitated in this way, and if no effort is made to hold trade and explain to the customer personally the difference between the genuine and the imitation, the honest American manufacturer is at a terrible disadvantage. I hope that in time, as our people become better educated, it will not be so easy to fool them. It is less easy in Salvador than in some other Central American countries because we are more familiar with foreign goods and ways. But in the meantime, if your young salesmen find that their efforts are often vain, let them try to discover the reason. Once secure our trade and you will keep it, be sure of that."



A Central American market place.

"Can one get well-made furniture here?" asked Mrs. Carroll.

Cárdenas gave another little shrug. "I hope you will be able to buy it in course of time. Most furniture from the United States is cheap and often put together with glue — then it soon comes apart. Cheap varnish is bad also in tropical climates. I talked when I was in New York with one manufacturer who thought he might be able to send me some light, strong, well-finished pieces in what you call 'knocked down' form, which could be put together without glue. But he said that to give me what I wanted he would have to design a special model. It must be in sets, — a set of straight chairs and the settee. As you may have noticed, our ladies are more formal in their furnishing than yours, and to please them the furniture must be of formal appearance. Leather and upholstery are not liked because —" another shrug — "they harbor insects. Bent wood furniture with cane seats and a hard oil finish is what you can get most easily, and most of that has been made in Europe."

It was clear that the young Salvadorean had some hope of becoming an importer on a large scale himself some day, and as Mrs. Carroll said after they left the trim little shop, if he made all his selections as intelligently and tastefully as he did the upholstery goods and souvenirs they had purchased, he might carry out his ambitions.

"The Salvadoreans are wide-awake people," said Mr. Carroll. "The way they are putting up their new buildings shows it. That church, my dear, is constructed with a special view to earthquakes. It is of pressed steel plates inside and out, bolted to wrought-iron framework, with a corrugated iron roof. Would you ever think it?"

Later they saw the handsome national hospital, built

in the same way. The National Palace, or capitol building, occupying a whole square and in the form of a hollow square, was of reënforced concrete. So was the national theater, in process of building.

"Not a piece of wood in that building," said Mr. Carroll. "And most of the building material comes from the United States."

The Barrancos, however, did not approve of corrugated iron. They objected to the noise during the rainy season. As for impregnated paper and other substitutes, they are out of the question in the tropics. Asbestos shingles had been considered by some builders. As Mr. Carroll assured Señor Barranco, if the people of Salvador gave as much thought and determination to the problem in the future as they had in the last few years, they would somehow or other find out how to build an earthquake-resisting and fireproof structure that would still be in harmony with the ancient Spanish architecture and their own taste.

The enterprise and ingenuity of the Carroll children were as interesting to the two Spanish-American girls as the life of the old plantation was to the visitors. From their babyhood Billy and Elizabeth had been given to understand that they must not expect older people to amuse them. Both their father and mother often spent a good deal of time in telling them stories and playing with them, but when other people were busy the children had always been told to entertain themselves. They often invented their own games, which to Beatriz and Carmelita seemed quite wonderful.

"Daddy," said Elizabeth to her father one afternoon, "may we borrow your big map? We've made a new game."

"It's in the suitcase," said Mr. Carroll, amused. "Be careful of it, that's all."

"Oh, we will!" sang Elizabeth, as she skipped away.

Two hours later a large sheet of manila paper had been covered with a map of Central America drawn with colored crayons. All bodies of water were indicated with wavy blue lines, the mountains and hills in gray, shading into black on the high ranges, and the volcanoes ornamented with red. The tablelands were brown and the low land green. Forests were shown as they are on old maps, by little treelike figures dotted over the ground. It was really not a bad topographical map, and a network of lines in black crayon divided it into sixty-four squares. The paper had been folded before the map was drawn to make these squares, and the lines ruled on the folds. Each square was numbered. In candy boxes and covers were many oval counters of cardboard bearing such words as "Gold," "Silver," "Coffee," "Bananas," "Cacao," and so on.

"You see," explained Elizabeth proudly to the older people, "we put the counters face down in a box and draw in turn. If we draw 'Coffee,' we can take up a claim in some place where coffee could grow. If we get 'Gold,' we put down a counter in some square where there could be a gold mine. If we make a mistake we have to put back the counter, and you can't put one into a square that has one in it already. The one who gets ten counters on the map first, wins."

"How do you decide whether your counter is on the right place or not?" asked her mother.

"The guidebook has a list of what grows in each country and what part of the country it's in," Billy answered. "Of course you can't put a shark counter on land, but

you can put any kind of fish in any part of the ocean squares. We didn't have any counters for the cities, but I s'pose we could."

It was agreed that the children had hit on a real idea. Mr. Carroll promised that when they were settled in some place they should have a real map and wooden counters which they could decorate in oil colors, and that he would help them make out a typewritten list of exactly what could be allowed on each square, for reference.

The next day, with real regret, they left the friendly Barrancos and departed for Acajutla, to take the steamer for San José in Guatemala.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

From Coast to Capital in Guatemala

A magnificent range of mountains rises in the background of the hot and squalid little seaport of San José in Guatemala. Fifty miles away are the peaks of Agua and Fuego, 12,000 feet high. Between these mountains the railway train passes to the city of Guatemala, ninety miles away and 4800 feet above sea level.

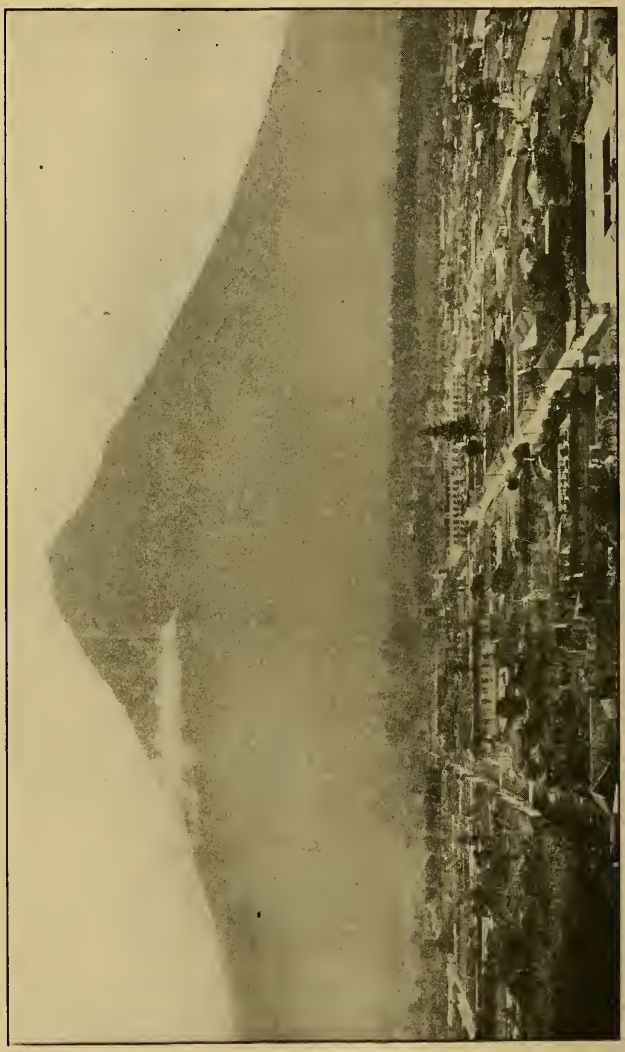
The journey took all day. At about noon the Carrolls found themselves in Escuintla, where the mercury stood at 115 degrees.

An Indian carrier with a load on his back.

"Father, is there any hotter place than this in the world?" asked Elizabeth. Billy had just expressed the opinion that you could fry eggs on the station platform if it was cleaner.

"Zacapa, on the eastern side of the slope, is the same sort of place," answered Mr. Carroll. "That is the halfway station between the capital and Puerto Barrios. Don't lose your patience; it will be cooler after a while."

"Central America is all ups and downs," observed Billy, craning his neck at the huge volcanoes above them.



Antigua, the former capital of Guatemala, with the Volcan de Agua in the background.

"Father, do you suppose we could make a relief map of it in the garden when we have one — have rocks and cement for the mountain ranges and plant seeds in the green part? Betts wants to, and I thought maybe we could."

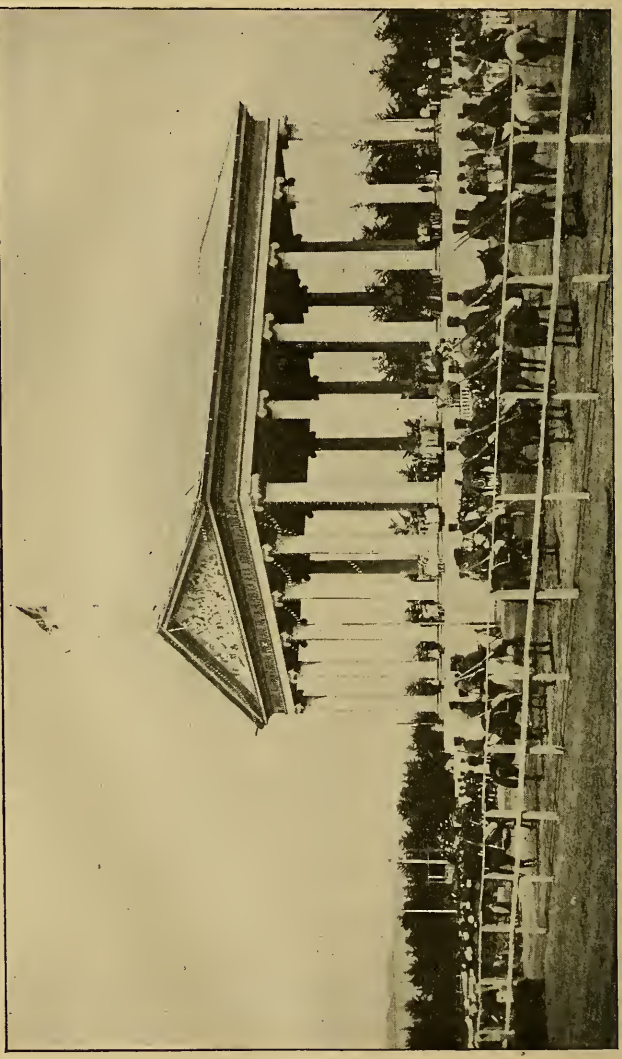
"Your forests might outgrow your mountains," said Mr. Carroll, "but if you want to take the trouble there's no reason why it couldn't be done. You'll see something of the kind at the Temple of Minerva."

"Where is that?"

"Every Guatemalan city has a public building for the use of its school children. School festivals and like celebrations are held in them. The official name is the Temple of Minerva."

The scenery on the long upward journey was more and more beautiful, and although it was too late to see much of the capital when the train arrived, the children went to bed with lively expectations of interesting sights next day.

The city of Guatemala is built on a plateau, around which the ground slopes into a deep valley. This, as Mr. Carroll explained when they started out to see the city, was supposed to be a reason for its freedom from earthquakes. As in the case of other Central American cities they had visited, the capital had originally been built on another site. Guatemala la Antigua, now usually called Antigua, was thirty miles west of Guatemala la Nueva, the present city, and was founded in 1524. In 1541 a flood of water from the volcano now called Volcan de Agua destroyed it, and it was rebuilt between Agua and Fuego. At one time it was among the finest cities in America, and in 1773 it had 60,000 inhabitants, or more than any city in the United States



The Temple of Minerva at Guatemala City during the Minerva Fiesta of 1917.

with the possible exception of New York. In that year an earthquake destroyed it, and although it was rebuilt, the present capital was founded in 1776.

Like other Latin cities they found Guatemala built around a plaza, on one side of which was the beautiful cathedral, on the other a government building. On the other two sides were rows of arches, once part of a monastery, but now a feature of rows of shops. It was in this plaza in 1821 that Central America threw off the yoke of Spain.

"Here is the Temple of Minerva," said Mr. Carroll, as they were out riding next morning.

The building was simple but attractive. There were no walls, and the broad roof was supported by columns. From all sides, broad stone steps led up to the stone floor, and in the shady interior little brown children were playing. At one side of the building on an open space was an odd-looking mass of rocky pointed hillocks.

"Look at this," said Mr. Carroll.

It was a relief map of Guatemala, occupying a space 150 feet square, the highest mountain about eight feet high, with actual water flowing down the channels of the rivers, and little iron rails indicating the railway lines. Every port and geographical feature was shown.

"Jupiter!" said Billy, with a long sigh. "I guess we won't be able to do anything like this!"

"We could make one just as pretty," said Elizabeth, stoutly. "Can't we, Daddy?"

"I think you can, in course of time. This will make an interesting model and probably be more or less useful to you. If we live here we shall have a garden and we must have a water supply, so that water could be piped from a fountain."

During the next few days Mrs. Carroll was much occupied in receiving calls from friends of Mr. Carroll and Señor Bastido, and as some of these friends had children, there was much to interest Elizabeth and Billy. They had reason to be glad that they knew Spanish well enough to talk freely, for none of the children they met knew English. One of Mr. Carroll's firm beliefs was that unless they knew a language well enough to read and speak it easily it was hardly worth while to learn it at all, and he had encouraged Lucía to teach them all she could. Mrs. Carroll had also read them little stories in Spanish, and had spoken Spanish with them more or less, at home.

Among their visitors was Señor Pérez, a big, genial Spanish-American who had a coffee finca, or plantation, about twenty miles away. He gave them a hearty invitation to visit the place, and as Mr. Carroll had an errand in that direction he took the children to see it.

A coffee plantation is a very pretty sight. Coffee needs upland soil, somewhat shaded. Newcomers have been known to clear land completely before starting a plantation, but very little coffee rewarded their labor. Señor Pérez, who planted his coffee on land only partly cleared, got a very good production to the acre. The coffee sold in Panama for ten cents a pound, and as he had some 10,000 trees his finca brought him in a considerable income.

The bushy little trees of the finca were about eight feet high, and the children were surprised to find that the ripe berries were not dark brown.

"Did you expect to find them roasted?" laughed their father. "I remember an old sea captain who lived on our street who always had his coffee brought green,

in the original bags, by a seafaring friend who was in the Brazil trade. The coffee for each meal had to be fresh roasted and ground to suit his taste. I must say that it was the best coffee I remember ever drinking, except some I have tasted hereabouts."

The leaves of the coffee shrub are dark glossy green, and the fruit looks like a dark red cherry. The flowers grow in white, fragrant clusters. Inside the berry are two kernels that look like a green bean cut in two lengthwise, and surrounded by yellowish pulp. Shell, pulp, and skin are removed by machinery, and when dry the kernels are sent to market.

Not far from the finca was a native Indian village. The houses were about eight by ten feet, with thatched roofs, no windows, and no chimney. The bed consisted of four posts driven into the ground, with slats across the top. On the slats was spread a skin, serving for mattress and bedclothing. A few gourds, a tea kettle,

A relief map of Guatemala.

and one or two pans were all the dishes in sight. In a small chest the best clothes of the family, a few ornaments, and provisions were kept.

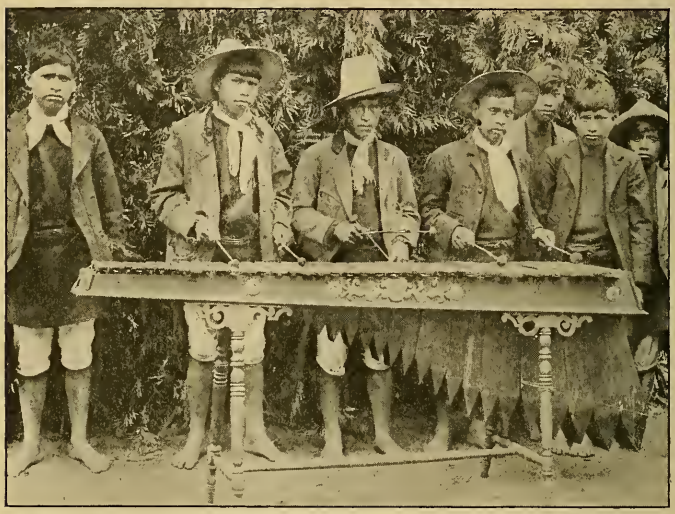
In one hut a girl of about fourteen was making tortillas. The other universal Indian dish, frijoles or black beans, would have looked like mud to the children if they had not known what it was. The beans had been boiled until they were a soft black mass. Chilies or red peppers, onions, and garlic are used for flavoring everywhere in Central America. On the fire in the Indian hut was an earthen jar of soup into which all scraps were thrown. It was kept simmering constantly. When at mealtime a dish of soup was taken out for each person, water was added, and the pot continued to bubble like a cheerful and industrious household fairy.

Some of the Indian girls were both pretty and picturesquely dressed in cloth woven on native looms. Señor Pérez told the children that each village has its own peculiar designs in goods, colors, and embroidery. When they reached the house Señora Pérez asked one of the Indian maids to show Betty how her dress was made and worn. There were four pieces, the huipil or waist, the falda or skirt, the sash, and the headdress. The huipil was made of two straight pieces of cloth sewed together, leaving an unsewed place in the middle of the seam for the head. The sides are then sewed up leaving arm holes, which gives an effect rather like a kimono. The falda is a straight piece of cloth wound around in a peculiar fashion and secured by the sash, a woven strip six or eight inches wide. This crosses behind and is passed around the hips and tucked in, confining the falda with an effect like that of some Spanish costumes. The headdress is a straight piece of cloth of some pretty

design. The Indian girl often braids into her long, black, shining hair a narrow, bright strip of woven cloth which has the effect of a ribbon. Mr. Carroll promised Betty that she should have some real hand-woven cloth of which to make an Indian costume, the next time they found an Indian woman with a good stock of patterns for sale, and as it happened, the very next day one appeared in the market. It did not take long to stitch up the seams, and that evening Betty appeared, greatly to the amusement of her father, in complete Indian dress, Guatemala style.

The last of Mr. Carroll's holiday was spent in a journey of a little more than a fortnight to Quezaltenango and back, by various ways of travel. He had intended when planning the trip in the beginning to leave the children with the Bastidos. Señor Bastido and Lucía had come to Guatemala and were living with an aunt of Lucía's in the city. But to their great delight he decided that they had proved themselves good travelers and might be allowed to go.

The eventful fortnight included more rough and ready experiences than any of them except the head of the family had ever had before. The first day they rode nearly thirty miles over a difficult mountain road. The next day they set out at six in the morning in a diligence or carryall drawn by five mules. At one o'clock they reached a little Indian village and ate tortillas and frijoles in the company of mules and mozos. Fording rivers, creeping around precipices on mule-back, over narrow paths cut out of the rock, they reached next day a railroad station where the thermometer was 110 degrees in the shade. Here they took what is called in Central America a mixed train, partly passenger cars and partly



Musicians of pure Indian blood playing the marimba. This instrument is said to have originated with the natives of Guatemala.

freight and cattle. Then they went on mule-back over the mountain trail to Quezaltenango, climbing nearly 9000 feet, while the thermometer dropped to 50 degrees as they ascended. One morning the road was bordered with banana, coffee, and orange trees, and the next afternoon they were riding through a pine forest. Quezaltenango is a city above the clouds.

On the return journey they had a beautiful ride along the banks of a stream, passing now and then a roaring cataract. The road descended 7000 feet as abruptly as most roads do in the mountain country of Central America. Now and then they met or overtook an Indian carrier with some sort of load on his back. Cotton, soap, and some other things go to Quezaltenango by

mules, but flour, cement, furniture, and most other necessities are carried thirty miles by Indian porters.

At last they reached a little town of some five hundred inhabitants, all but fifty of them Indians. Here a train passed three times a week on its way to Guatemala City, and the Carrolls took rooms at the leading hotel. By this time the children had reached the point where they regarded every new experience as an adventure to be stored up with delight. A letter which Elizabeth wrote, during their stay, to her favorite schoolmate in the United States caused a decided sensation when it arrived. It read as follows:

Dear Edith,

I am writing to you to tell you about our camping out in the mountains. We camped in tents part of the time and rode on mules almost all the way. Now we are in a hotel waiting for the train to come. I know you never saw a hotel anything like it. Everything is of stone or tile except the furniture and dishes. There isn't much furniture. Our room has stone walls and floor and one little window. We slept on high cots. There is one chair in the room where mother and I slept, and a kind of wash stand. There is an open yard in the middle of the hotel, with a round stone trough in it where they get all the water in jars. The chambermaid has just come in with a jar of water on her head.

The yard is full of mules, chickens, pigs, and sheep. A man has just killed a chicken for our supper. There isn't any ice or any butcher shop, so they keep the animals here and kill them when they need to.

Mother is trying to take a nap, and a parrot in a tree by the door is trying to keep her awake. I am writing at a table in the dining-room, and father is reading a Spanish paper a week old. He ordered some tea just now, and when the maid took the cup she threw what was left of the tea on the floor. Two hens are walking around my feet and a pig came in, but father shooed him out and he didn't come back. I expect the mules will come in next. When we came in last night, we had to wait a few minutes in the

only parlor they had. It was the bar-room. One man was drinking and another walking up and down with a big revolver, and another was telling about something that happened in Mexico that sounded rather awful; but none of them really meant any harm at all.

We are all well and as brown as Indians, and everything tastes good; so we eat lots. I know you will think we must be crazy, but I never had such a good time in my life. We haven't been in an earthquake, but we've done 'most everything else. I can't send you a post card because they don't have any here, but I've taken lots of pictures and so has Billy.

Give my love to all the girls.

BETTY.

That night, when all were sound asleep, the beds began to rock like cradles. Mr. Carroll was wide awake in an instant and, catching up blankets, woke his wife and children, wrapped them in the blankets, and guided them out of doors. The floors were tilting like rocking chairs. The Central Americans behaved as if accustomed to be shaken up in the middle of the night, although there was more or less shouting and the dogs barked excitedly. Chickens woke up and squawked. Some plants and other things hanging from the roof swung to and fro. But no damage was done, and the birds in the trees near by slept peacefully through all the commotion.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Last Days in Guatemala

As the Carrolls settled down in Guatemala and became acquainted, they noticed that in almost every home they visited there was a stuffed bird of a curious species, — a quaint, brilliantly colored bird with a very long tail. One day when they were all taken to call upon the President by Señor Bastido, who knew him well, he saw the children admiring the specimen which ornamented his reception room, and asked in very good English, "You know what the bird is, do you not?"

The quetzal bird.

"The quetzal," answered Billy. "It's on the postage stamps."

"And on the Guatemala coat of arms," added Betty.

"Yes; and Quezaltenango is named for it. The name means 'the place of the quetzal birds.' But do you know why we choose that bird for our national emblem? The quetzal is peculiar in not being able to live in captivity. If you put it in a cage, it will die. Is not that a good symbol for a freedom-loving people? We sometimes meet people from your country and from Europe who

wonder at our love of liberty, but we would rather have our freedom even if we must remain poor than be subject to oppression. That is why we love the quetzal bird, because he will not be caged."

The Carrolls liked Guatemala more and more as they became better acquainted with the people and more accustomed to the life. Mr. Carroll's business engagements proved so varied that for a time they gave up the thought of housekeeping and lived at hotels. Finally, however, offices were secured in the city and a house rented in the suburbs. They moved in for a Thanksgiving house-warming in November, 1917.

The children gleefully unpacked their own particular treasures and pottered about the garden with their father, making plans for the future. They were looking forward to even more extended camping experiences, for Mr. Hobart had stayed in Guatemala for a day on his way to New York and promised to lend his outfit and advice.

"And Betty was the girl who was shocked at the idea of butterless bread," teased her father. "And this time last year Billy was worrying over — what was it, son, that you weren't going to have here?"

"I forget," said Billy. "Nothing very important."

"It's fun to know you can get along without things," said Elizabeth. "I like my bread that way now."

Mr. Carroll began to feel as if the move had been very well worth while. He wished his children to have everything they needed and much that they would enjoy, but he did not like the idea of their being dependent on the things money could buy.

Only enough of their furniture had been brought from the United States to give a flavor of home to the house.

It was not crowded, and the large rooms and bare spaces, the jars of ferns and flowers, and the bright cushions and draperies of native cottons gave a pretty, foreign look to the place. At their house-warming the company was as mixed as the furnishing. Señor Bastido and Lucía came, of course. Señor Pérez and his wife came in from the finca. Dr. Macgregor came. So did young Frost, O'Keefe, and even young Follansbee, whom the other men found at San José and brought to the Thanksgiving dinner. Mr. Hobart could not be there, but sent them a fine jaguar skin for the floor of the living-room. Old Mr. Bradford had sent them a curious old silver lamp of Spanish workmanship, which had been dug up years before under a ruined chapel on his estate. When Señora Pérez saw it, she promised to give them some perfumed oil, made by a very old recipe used in the great house of a grandee of old Guatemala.

Late in the evening, when the Central American guests had taken their leave, the Carrolls and their countrymen lingered to discuss the war news. Each had some friend or relative already in the service, and the three younger men expected soon to go home to enter training camps. Yet all had felt the charm of

Cathedral fronting on the main plaza in Guatemala City.

these strange, tropical, half-wild lands of Spanish America, and all hoped some day to return to their work here.

"Aye," said Dr. Macgregor, thoughtfully, "she's a grand country for those that have the vision. She's the land that has never grown old, and she holds the dreams of the world in her heart.

"Four hundred years ago the auld Spaniards came here looking for the fountain of youth and the paradise on earth. But there's no paradise without peace, and no peace without justice, and no justice without freedom. To do as ye'd be done by — I'm thinking that's the key to the treasure of Latin-America."

"Or of any land," said Mr. Carroll. "Nobody can bully or bribe the millennium. It's a thing that must have time to grow. And it won't grow for those who don't believe in it."

"What amazes me," said the engineer, "is that with all they've had against them these Central American republics have held on to their beliefs as they have. Look at the way their colonial governors crippled them; look at the country and the way it has hampered any sort of development; look at the way that city after city has been tumbled down by earthquakes and rebuilt; look at the way they used to be pestered by pirates and robbers of all descriptions. And yet they've gone right on, beginning over again. Central America isn't a has-been; she's just beginning to be. When your company with its electrical machines, and Follansbee here with his hardware, and the rest of us with our American ideas, get our work connected up with this country, it certainly will be a team. Why, they've never really been on trading terms with us until lately, and here were we, nextdoor neighbors! There's bound to be a shake-up."

The words were hardly spoken when the windows rattled and the house seemed to give a kind of shudder. After a minute the tremor shook it again.

"See here, Frost, don't make any more such rash remarks," Mr. Carroll protested, laughing. "Remember that this is an earthquake country."

No more shocks were felt, however, and the guests at last took their departure, promising that if possible they would spend Christmas with the Carrolls.

In the following weeks several more slight earthquakes were felt. Mr. Carroll began to be uneasy. He could hardly leave his newly established business, and did not want to send his family north without him. Other people seemed to think little of the quakes, and he felt that perhaps he was over-anxious.

On Christmas day Dr. Macgregor and young Frost dined at the Carrolls' and invited them to go into town to see a moving picture show. It was a moonlight night, and the little excursion was unusual enough to be rather a treat to the children. Their home being a little way out of town and Mr. Carroll being occupied at his office in the evening, they had not been to any sort of show for months.

At eleven o'clock, just as the theater was about to close, there came a shock that sent the crowd scurrying out into the evening air pell-mell. Buildings were falling in various parts of the city, and the electric light company promptly turned off the current to prevent trouble from fallen wires. Dr. Macgregor picked up Elizabeth as if she had been a baby. Mr. Carroll took charge of his wife, and Billy and Mr. Frost turned their attention to assisting some frightened women and children to get clear of the buildings and into the plaza.

Drinking water for Guatemala City is supplied by carts like this.

"Well, this is one way to celebrate Christmas!" said the engineer, when they were all in a clear space. "Carroll, do you want help anywhere? I'm at your service if you do."

"I wish you'd come around to the office with me," said Mr. Carroll, who had been thinking rapidly. "I shall need somebody with a head on his shoulders. Doctor, will you see Mrs. Carroll and the children home? We'll catch up with you, but I want to get them out of this as soon as possible."

The party accordingly started picking their way along the railroad tracks in the moonlight, and before they had gone far Mr. Carroll overtook them on a borrowed mule. Riding and walking by turns, they made their way among crowds of people weeping and praying or calmly trudging along to some clear place outside the town. They had gone about halfway home when there came another

violent shock, and the front of a two-storied house seemed to melt before their eyes. From behind them, in the city, came the sound of falling walls, and a great cloud of dust rose. They all thought of Señor Bastido and Lucía, but nobody said anything.

At last they reached their new home, expecting to find it in ruins, but it seemed quite unharmed. Then at last Mrs. Carroll spoke. Neither she nor any one else had uttered a word except to caution one another against stumbling.

"What has become of Mr. Frost?" she asked.

"He volunteered to go around and see if he could help Bastido and his family," answered Mr. Carroll. "I told him if he found them to bring them out here — quick."

Another quake less severe than the first came just as he finished speaking, and was followed by others not so sharp. Billy afterward said that the earthquake "seemed to be getting tired."

"It won't do to try to sleep in that house," said Mr. Carroll. "We'll make a run in and get coats and wraps and camp here in the yard."

This was done, and with a collection of rugs and blankets, and hammocks slung under the trees, the Carroll family and Dr. Macgregor settled down, as Billy said, "to see the house fall if it was going to."

But nothing fell. Dr. Macgregor presently got up and wandered out to see what he could do for some of the unfortunate people who had been injured. Toward morning, Mrs. Carroll went to sleep in a hammock. Billy rolled himself in a blanket and slept on a lawn settee. Elizabeth curled up like a kitten in the other hammock, and Mr. Carroll prowled about or sat watching the stars and trying to make plans.

About three o'clock a mule and a bicycle turned in at the gate. On the mule rode Lucía and her father; on the bicycle, which was more or less damaged, rode the young engineer. Lucía's aunt was coming in a wagon, with some neighbors.

Dawn showed that the house, while standing, was not safe for use. Walls were cracked and glass broken. The second story was so shaky that it might fall at any minute and wreck most of the lower floor. The kitchen, the only unwrecked part, had been built backed up against a high dirt wall. Manuela, the old cook who had lived for half her life with Lucía's family, began making coffee and getting breakfast as if nothing had happened.

Everybody went to work to drag the furniture out in the yard. Under the engineer's direction Billy and some men and boys of the neighborhood began working at makeshift windbreaks and shelters covered with awnings out of doors. Mrs. Carroll, with the help of the women servants and Elizabeth and Lucía, directed the placing of the furniture and rapidly sorted and packed away things not needed at once, so that they could be moved when possible.

"Betty," said Lucía in a low tone, as they trotted back and forth with their loads, "are you frightened?"

Elizabeth paused before replying. "I don't believe I am," she said. "I guess we're too busy to be scared. Wait till we get these things out and I'll tell you."

About noon came O'Keefe and Follansbee, tramping over the railroad tracks, and reported the city badly wrecked. The Follansbee offices were in a building that was, as the young salesman said briefly, smashed into smithereens. The young men had lost everything in the way of personal possessions except what they had

on, for their hotel had been destroyed. The authorities had shut off all light and power, of course, and the aqueducts were in a state that reduced the water supply to practically nothing.

"No water!" said Elizabeth. "My goodness!"

"We have reason to thank heaven that we have a pump," said Mr. Carroll.

They realized this during the next few days, for all day long a procession of women with water jars was making use of their pump, the only water supply for a large section of the city. To draw water from a well 200 feet deep is not play, as every one discovered, but it is much better than having none at all.

Dr. Macgregor was working among the injured people, and Señor Bastido was helping him. As soon as they had done what they could to help the Carrolls arrange a temporary shelter, the three young men went to see what they could do to help reorganize the demoralized city.

In the early afternoon of Saturday came another severe

Ruins of Carmen church after the earthquake.

shock and more people were killed; crowds were leaving the city on foot. The British legation and other dignified government offices were on the ground. The cable office was a table in the public square. Public officials were carrying on their necessary business where they could, out of doors.

The Carrolls stayed on, hoping soon to be able to move their furniture to some safe place. On the following Thursday, as Billy told the story some months afterward to old Mr. Follansbee, "there was a splendiferous quake in the middle of the night. Betts and I were sitting up to see what was going to break loose, when the ends of the house fell out and covered everything with about a million bushels of dust. Cry? No, sir, Betty didn't cry, and neither did Lucía. They wouldn't have missed it for anything — but we did begin to wonder if anything more was coming. You see, when we were coming out home after the first quake we heard a man say we might be sitting on a crater for all we knew. If the old volcano was going to spout any lava, a person would rather sit up on a safe mountain across the valley and see it than be part of the performance. But we didn't talk about that."

After the experience of Thursday Mr. Carroll decided to wait no longer. Señor Bastido and Lucía were anxious that the family should come to the ranch in Costa Rica where Lucía's aunt and cousins already were. In a country where transportation is mainly a matter of porters and mules, they found it possible to get their furniture out of the town without hunting for vans and expressmen. Mr. Carroll was daily expecting instructions from the company in regard to establishing offices in one of the coast towns. He decided to turn their own premises over to Dr. Macgregor for his hospital.

In spite of the dilapidated state of things, the last evening the Carrolls spent in their wrecked home was not a sad one. They set the graphophone going and sat under the trees listening to opera music, patriotic airs, and old songs. A few cans and bottles remained from their provisions, and with the help of a chafing dish Mrs. Carroll served a meal which every one declared perfect. All their makeshifts and discomforts only seemed to add to the gayety. It was an evening to remember.

Dr. Macgregor was there, a little grimmer and more silent than usual, and the three young Americans were there, much more intimate than they had been before this week of danger and hard work. There was just room for the six grown people and two children around the packing-box table, under the old Spanish lantern.

"Wonder if they'd give me the job of rebuilding the town when I come back?" said Frost.

"Pick out a safe place for it, then," suggested Follansbee.

"Easier said than done," chuckled O'Keefe. "Nothing seems to be safe in these days."

"After all, people," Frost remarked, soberly, "none of us would really want to have missed this. I never knew before how fine human nature can be. You know, when we found Señor Bastido he was under a pile of wreckage that had caught fire. And he never lost his head for a second."

"Lucía is just as brave," said Mrs. Carroll. "The child hasn't complained or whimpered once — and all her life is broken up. She hasn't a thing now but the ranch, and she's sharing that with us and her aunt and cousins."

Ruins of a church.

"If the Central Americans can stand it, we ought to be able to," said Mr. Carroll. "Have you heard from your father, Joe?"

"I got a telegram today, Mr. Carroll," young Follansbee answered. "He's already sending tents and provisions and disinfectants. He didn't say a word about the loss; just said I was to do what I could and report when I could."

"Good American," said Frost.

"I move," said Mr. Carroll, rising, "that we give three cheers for our friends the Central Americans — and then join hands and sing 'America'!"

. . . . . .

People should never be judged by what they have, but rather by how they secured it; not by what they lose, but rather by how they recover. The things which come easily to us do us little good, whether buildings, money, or lessons. We grow only as we do difficult

things. Disappointments and discouragements show what we are made of.

This important rule applies to cities as well as to people. The test of a nation or a city is its ability to "come back." You cannot tell what any country or community is made of until it has suffered a great catastrophe by fire, earthquake, or war. Belgium did not become famous by reason of its buildings, wealth, or foreign trade. It achieved fame because of its willingness to suffer so much for a cause and then to recover after the suffering and again to become a great nation.

Although Guatemala City still shows many signs of the great earthquake which wiped it out during the last week of 1917, yet it is today a better and busier city than ever before. Modern improvements have been instituted, better buildings have been constructed, and the city has spread out into the suburbs to the benefit of all. Yes, Guatemala City has "come back"; it still holds its place as the leading city of Central America.

The Carrolls are at home in the United States again, and our other friends of the story are scattered; but when writing one another they all are planning on a reunion some day in the new Guatemala City. Perhaps it would be well to close this story with a quotation from a letter just received from Central America:

"The past is behind us; the future is ahead of us. Let us forget the past and go forth into the future filled with the spirit of service. No place offers greater opportunities for service to the people of other countries than Central America, and surely no place has been endowed with greater natural advantages and can be of greater service to the rest of the world than Central America."

INDEX

Abacá, 79.
Acajutla, Salvador, 171, 172.
Agua, Volcan de, 191, 193.
Aguacate, fruit, 150.
Aguardiente, drink, 128.
Alligator pears, 73.
Alligators, 69; in Honduras, 146.
Almagro, adventurer, 89.
Almirante Bay, 64.
Amapala, Honduras, 144, 145, 146, 168.
Animals of Panama, 51.
Antigua, Guatemala, 192, 193, 195.
Antimony in Honduras, 153.
Aspinwall, city of, 38.
Automobile roads in Central America, 98.
Avocado, fruit, 73.
Azadón, hoe, 25, 26, 27.
Aztec Indians, 46.

Balboa, discoverer, 34, 51–55.
Balsam of Peru from Salvador, 177–178.
Banana plantation, Costa Rica, 69–79.
Banana production, 8, 77, 125.
Bastida, Rodrigo de, 34.
Bees in Costa Rica, 103–104, 105.
Birds of Costa Rica, 59, 81.
Black pearls, 56.
Bocas del Toro, 67.
Burial customs of Costa Rican Indians, 95, 107.
Butter, substitutes for, 42, 133–134.
Butterfly jewelry, 59.

Cacao, in Costa Rica, 79; in Nicaragua, 125; plantation for raising, 135–142.
Cartago, old capital of Costa Rica, 86.
Cattle raising in Costa Rica, 81, 82.
Chagres River, 29, 34.
Chiriqui Lagoon, 64.
Chiriqui pearl, 55.
Chocolate, made in Nicaragua, 135–142.
Cinnamic acid, from balsam of Salvador, 178.
Cock-fighting in Nicaragua, 121.
Cocoa butter, 141.
Cocoa production, 141.
Coconuts, 31, 41–42; in Honduras, 151.
Coffee growing, in Costa Rica, 100, 104; in Guatemala, 196–197.
Cohune palm, 157.
Coir, uses of, 42.
Colombia, republic of, 47.
Colon, town of, 34, 37–38, 39, 60.
Columbus, Christopher, 39–40, 59–60, 62–67, 129.
Comayagua, Honduras, 165–166.
Copra, 42.
Corinto, Nicaragua, 121–122.
Coronado, 161.
Cortés, 46.
Costa de la Oreja, La, 63.
Costa Rica, 68–109.
Cristobal, 37–38.
Culebra Cut, 38, 45.
Custard apple, 68.

Darien Colony, 36.
Darien Company, 15–19.
Dávila, Gil González, 129–130.
De las Casas, Bartolomé, 61.
De León, Ponce, 123, 125, 129.

De Lesseps, Ferdinand, 47.
Dyewoods in Honduras, 151.

Earthquakes, in Costa Rica, 86; in Salvador, 187–188; in Guatemala, 202, 207–215.
East India Company, 17, 18.
Escuintla, Guatemala, 191.

Falda, part of dress, 198.
Figs in Costa Rica, 86.
Fish of Panama, 51.
Flour from bananas, 77.
Fonseca Bay, 164.
Forests, of Costa Rica, 81; of Honduras, 144, 146, 148.
Frijoles, black beans, 103, 198.
Fruits, of Costa Rica, 80; of Nicaragua, 121, 125–126; of Honduras, 151.
Fuego, Volcan de, Guatemala, 191.
Funerals and funeral customs, 87, 178–179.

Gaillard Cut, 38, 45.
Gatun Lake, 43, 46.
Gatun Locks, 43, 44.
Geography game, 32–36.
Gold, in Costa Rica, 81, 83, 105–107; in Nicaragua, 130–131; in Honduras, 151–154, 158–167.
Gold mine, visit to, 158–167.
Guatemala, city of, 191, 193–196, 203–215.
Guatemala, republic of, 191–215.

Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, 48.
Honduras, 143–167.
Honey, in Costa Rica, 103–104.
Huipil, waist of dress, 65, 198.

Ilopango, Lake, 175.
Indian girls in Guatemala, 198–199.
Indians of Costa Rica, 85, 90–96.
Izalco, volcano of, 86, 172–173, 176.

Jaguars in Honduras, 148.
Jocote, fruit, 129.
Juaquiniquil trees, 138.

La Libertad, Salvador, 171, 172.
La Unión, Salvador, 170–171.
León, Nicaragua, 123, 124, 125–129.
Lightering freight, 111.
Limón, Costa Rica, 68.
Limón Bay, 39, 66.
Locks of Panama Canal, 43, 44, 45, 46, 50.
Lumbering in Costa Rica, 81.
Luque, Spanish priest, 89.

Machete, 26, 27.
Mahogany trees in Honduras, 148–150.
Managua, Nicaragua, 122, 132.
Mantillas, 84.
Marimba, musical instrument, 200.
Maya textiles, 65.
Menagerie, game of, 49.
Minerals, of Costa Rica, 81, 83; of Honduras, 153–154.
Miraflores Locks, 43, 46, 50.
Momotombo, volcanic mountain, 123–125.
Mule-back riding, 97–99.
Mule transportation, 23.

Nicaragua, 121–142.
Nicaragua canal route, 128.

Orchids in Honduras, 146, 157.
Orioles in Costa Rica, 81.
Oxen in Honduras, 155, 156, 157.

Panama, city of, 34, 38, 43, 55, 56.
Panama, republic of, 33, 38, 47.
Panama Canal, 31–56.
Panama Canal Act, 48.
Panama Canal Zone, 37, 47–48.
Panama Railroad, 38, 47.
Papaya, fruit, 121.
Parrots in Costa Rica, 59.
Paterson, William, 15–19, 46.
Pearl Islands, 55.
Pearls of Panama, 52, 55.
Pedrarias, 53, 55, 89.
Pedro Miguel, 46.
Peruvian balsam from Salvador, 177–178.
Pizarro, 52, 89.
Plantains, 75.
Pomegranates in Nicaragua, 125, 126.
Poonac, 42.
Port Escoces, 19.
Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, 31, 191.
Puerto Gordo, 66.
Puerto Limon, Costa Rica, 63–64.
Pumas in Honduras, 147.
Punta Arenas, 108, 110.

Quetzal bird, 51, 203.
Quezaltenango, Guatemala, 26, 199, 200; derivation of name, 203.

Railroad building, 26, 108, 146.
Rebozo, shawl or scarf, 84.
Relief map of Guatemala, 195, 197.
Rubber in Costa Rica, 80.

Salesmanship, talks on, 20–29, 115–120, 182–187.
Salvador, republic of, 168–169.
San Blas Indians, 39.
San Felipe, 26.
San Juancito mountains, gold mining in, 152–153, 157–167.
San José, Costa Rica, 84.
San José, Guatemala, 191.
San Salvador, capital of Salvador, 181–190.
Santa María la Antigua, 51.
Sarsaparilla from Honduras, 151.
Shark-shooting in Salvador, 172.
Shopkeeping in Salvador, 181–187.
Silver, in Costa Rica, 81; in Honduras, 153.
Snakes in Costa Rica, 105.
Spanish names, 40.
Subtiaba, Indian village in Nicaragua, 125.

Taboga, island of, 89.
Tagua nuts, 93.
Talamanca Indians, 90–96.
Tegucigalpa, Honduras, 145, 147, 160, 165.
Temples of Minerva, Guatemala, 193–195.
Teredo, shipworm, 64.
Tortillas, corn cakes, 102–103, 198.

Vanilla from Honduras, 151.
Vaqueros, 133, 177.
Vegetable ivory, 93.
Vegetables, of Costa Rica, 80; of Nicaragua, 125–126; of Honduras, 151.
Vinegar, banana, 77.
Volcano, of Irazu, 86; of Momotombo, 123–125; of Izalco, 172–173, 176.
Volcanoes in Guatemala, 191, 193.

Yojoa, Lake, 146.

Zacapa, Guatemala, 191.
Zinc in Honduras, 153.

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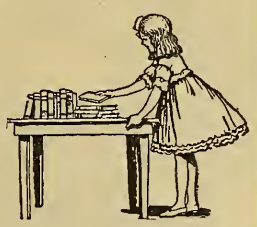

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